Wonderful Stories

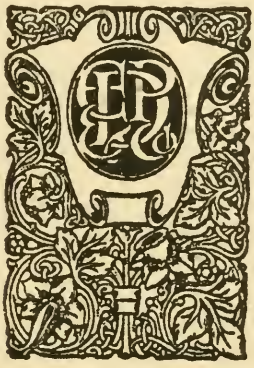
Winning the V.C. in the Great War

Painted specially for this work *by Allen Stewart*

Lieutenant Rhodes-Moorhouse flying over Courtrai to Bomb the Railway.

Wonderful Stories. Winning the V.C. in the Great War

With a coloured frontispiece and 56 other full-page illustrations, printed on art paper, specially painted by W. S. Bagdatopulos, Arthur Burgess, John de G. Bryan, Montague Dawson, Edgar A. Holloway, A. Pearse, A. Stewart, H. G. Swanwick, etc.



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Painted specially for this work.] [*By G. D. Rowlandson.*

Captain Theodore Wright connecting up the lead for destroying a bridge at Mons, whilst under very heavy fire.

Painted specially for this work] [*By G. D. Rowlandson.*

Captain Wright, V.C., falls mortally wounded while assisting wounded men into shelter.

[*Facing p.* 1.

WINNING THE V.C.

How Captain Theodore Wright, of the Royal Engineers, won the V.C. at Mons.

In considering the disposition of the British Army at the Battle of Mons on August 23rd, 1914, it may be asked with some justification how it was that the Army came to defend the bridges along the line of the Mons Canal. For in view of the attacks which the Germans were expected to deliver in the attempt to win the bridges, the obvious plan was to blow them up and so force the enemy, if he so desired, to cross the canal by means of pontoon bridges.

The reason for not destroying the bridges in the first stage of the battle was to be found in the expectation, which the little British Army held, of advancing across the canal, and in view of the overwhelming superiority of the Germans in numbers the confidence which the British reposed in themselves is worthy of the greatest admiration.

When, after forced marches, the British Expeditionary Force reached Mons on August 22nd, 1914, it was primarily concerned in extending the French line in a north-westerly direction. The geographical feature, which it was intended to make use of for this purpose, was the high road running from Charleroi through Binche to Mons.

This line proved to be impracticable, however, for when the British reached it, the Germans were already in possession of Charleroi, and the French had fallen back beyond that part of the line originally assigned to the British. If it had occupied the Mons–Charleroi road under such circumstances, the British Force would have run grave risk of being cut off and surrounded.

The 1st Army Corps was therefore obliged to range itself along the Mons–Beaumont road, in rear of the position originally intended, while the 2nd Army Corps lined the Mons Canal, between that place and Condé. The position was not a perfect one, as the two army corps ran practically at right angles to one another. But, as it happened, the entire attack at Mons fell on the 2nd Army Corps, and the battle, therefore, may be partly considered as an attempt by the Germans at a flanking or enveloping movement.

The Mons Canal would have been an ideal feature to defend, running, as it does, in an absolutely straight line from Condé to Mons. But, after passing through the latter place, it makes a very serious defect in an attempted defence by throwing out a loop to the north, about two miles long by one and a half across. This loop, as well as the straight reach to Condé, was occupied by the British, but the position could not possibly be held for long.

The battle began at early dawn on August 23rd, and it was evident that the canal loop was to receive special attention from the enemy. All through the day attacks were launched against the Nimy bridge, at the north-west corner of the loop, and the Ghlin bridge; but it was only when the overwhelming numbers of the Germans made it necessary that the British troops were withdrawn to the south side of the canal.

During one of these withdrawals Captain Theodore Wright, of the Royal Engineers, gallantly attempted, under heavy fire, to connect up the lead for blowing up a bridge. Although wounded in the head, he made a second attempt, and this time he succeeded. He showed the greatest coolness and bravery in face of the enemy, and was rewarded with the V.C.

He was, unhappily, killed at Vailly on September 14th. On this occasion Captain Wright was assisting the passage of the 5th Cavalry Brigade across the pontoon bridge over the Aisne. The bridge itself and both banks of the river were under fire, but with the greatest care and solicitude he assisted the wounded back into shelter. It was while escorting one of them that Captain Wright fell mortally wounded.

How Lieutenant Maurice James Dease, of the 4th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers, won the V.C. at Mons.

On reaching Mons on August 22nd, 1914, the part assigned to the British force was that of extending the French line in a north-westerly direction. The line taken extended along the line of the canal from Condé on the west, through Mons and Binche on the east. From Condé to Mons, inclusive, was held by the Second Corps, and on the right of the Second Corps from Mons the First Corps was posted, while the 5th Cavalry Brigade was at Binche. The forward reconnaissance was entrusted to Brigadier-General Sir Philip Chetwode, with the 5th Cavalry Brigade, and with the assistance of a few squadrons

sent forward by General Allenby, most useful work was done. Several encounters took place, in which the British showed to great advantage, and some of the squadrons penetrated as far as Soignies.

It was evident from the start that the area which covered the loop of the canal had been marked down by the enemy as the weakest point in the defence. If they succeeded in crossing the canal close to the salient, the British would perforce have to abandon the line of defence along the straight reach to Condé. For the time being, therefore, it was resolved to confine all efforts to the salient.

With dawn on Sunday, August 23rd, came the first shell in the great Battle of Mons. The bombardment increased as the morning advanced, and when at 8 a.m. fresh batteries came into action, the first infantry attack was launched against the Nimy bridge, at the north-west corner of the canal loop. The northern side of the canal, throughout the entire length covered by the attack, is dotted with small fir plantations; and, screened by these, the enemy poured a deadly fire from machine-guns on our troops, besides massing infantry attacks at whatever point they chose.

With superior numbers, Von Klück could afford to throw away life freely, and about nine o'clock four battalions were suddenly flung at the head of the Nimy bridge. It was only defended by a single company of the Royal Fusiliers, under Captain Ashburner, and a machine-gun, in charge of Lieutenant Dease. As the enemy advanced in close column their front sections collapsed under the deadly fire poured into them by the British machine-guns, and rifles. They fell back in haste to one of the plantations, and then, after half an hour, advanced in extended order. The attack was checked but not stopped.

As Captain Ashburner was hard pressed on the Nimy bridge, Second Lieutenant Mead was sent with a platoon to support him. He was at once badly wounded in the head, but after being dressed, returned to the firing-line, where in a few moments he was shot through the head and killed. Captain Bowdon-Smith and Lieutenant Smith then came up with another platoon, but within ten minutes they were both badly wounded. The position was now growing very desperate. Lieutenant Dease had been hit three times while working his machine-gun, Captain Ashburner was wounded in the head, and Captain Forster, in a

trench to the right, had been shot through the right arm and stomach.

Towards midday the attack against the straight reach of the canal became general, and the German infantry, coming out from the cover of the fir plantations, worked their way to within a few hundred yards of the water, and from the cover of the trees kept up a continuous rifle and machine-gun fire. They made no real advance, but when the Nimy salient was abandoned, the retirement of the troops to the left of it became imperative. This, however, was no easy matter. Before they reached cover they had to cross two hundred and fifty yards of flat, open ground, which was swept by a storm of shrapnel and machine-gun fire.

Lieutenant Dease, who had stood by his gun all through, was now quite unable to move, having been hit no less than five times. Lieutenant Steele, who alone of the whole section was neither killed nor wounded, caught him up and carried him from the fire zone to a place of safety, and here he subsequently succumbed to his wounds. For the most gallant part he took in the defence of the Nimy bridge a posthumous award of the V.C. was made.

How Lance-Corporal Charles Alfred Jarvis, of the 57th Field Company, Royal Engineers, won the V.C. at Jemappes.

At the height of a battle there can be no work requiring so much nerve as that of the Royal Engineers. The men are highly skilled, and to them falls the task of repairing roads and bridges for the transport of an army and its equipment, often under the enemy's fire. They have many other duties to perform both in and out of action, and the skill and bravery of the men have always received the highest commendation. The corps was destined to win fresh fame in the retreat from Mons and in the subsequent advance across the Aisne.

On Sunday, August 23rd, 1914, the British were engaged in a desperate struggle at Mons against overwhelming numbers of the enemy. For a time the Germans, in spite of costly efforts, could make no real headway along the straight reach of the Mons Canal. If the defence of the position had been prolonged, however, the British would almost certainly have been cut off, and in the afternoon, therefore, Sir John French gave the order for the retirement.

The little army then began to fall slowly back while the Germans flung themselves in attack after attack against its battle-front. The British, however, faced them with stubborn courage, compelling them to pay very dearly for the ground which they gained. Especially was this so along the line of the canal between St. Ghislain and Condé, where the Germans suffered great losses in an effort to force a crossing.

But nearer Mons they had pushed their way through the suburbs of the city to the south, where they caught the Royal Irish Fusiliers and the Middlesex Regiment in isolated positions. In fighting for their existence these two regiments suffered severe losses. But in the nick of time the Gordon Highlanders came to their rescue, and assisted them in extricating themselves from their perilous position, just as night was coming on. Previous to this the Royal Fusiliers had fallen back through Mons to Hyon, and the Royal Scots Fusiliers, who had put up a great fight at Jemappes, through Flere.

It was at Jemappes that Corporal Charles Alfred Jarvis, of the 57th Field Company, Royal Engineers, won the V.C. He was ordered to go out and blow up the Jemappes bridge, but experienced great difficulty in doing so. Con-

tinuously under fire, he worked for one and a half hours before he eventually managed to destroy the bridge under the very eyes of the Germans. He had accomplished a most important piece of work, which prevented the Germans from crossing the canal at this point and following up the retreating British Army in large numbers. His cool and courageous work was subsequently recognized by the award of the V.C.

How Private Sidney Frank Godley, of the 4th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers, London Regiment, won the V.C. at Mons.

It was on that fateful Sunday, August 23rd, 1914, that Private Sidney Frank Godley, of the 4th Battalion, The Royal Fusiliers, London Regiment, won the V.C. at Mons. The battle began at dawn, and all through the day the British were engaged in a tremendous struggle against overwhelming odds. They were outnumbered and outgunned; and the Germans, with their enormous reserves of men, launched attacks all day along the canal in desperate efforts to force a crossing.

From nine o'clock onwards the Nimy bridge

[*By W. S. Bagdatopulos. Painted specially for this work*]

Private S. F Godley routs the massed attacks of the Germans at the Ghlin Bridge, Mons, by the deadly fire of his machine-gun.

[*Facing p.* 10.

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. S. Bagdatopulos.*

Captain F O. Grenfell, assisted by officers and men of the 9th Lancers, manhandling guns out of action near Doubon.

[*See p.* 17

was the object of very heavy attacks. But Lieutenant Dease did terrible work with his machine-gun as the Germans advanced in mass formation, and they were thrown back time after time to the fir plantations on the northern side of the canal, between the Ghlin and Nimy bridges. The plantations were of great use to the enemy, as besides allowing them to reform their broken ranks under cover, they also masked their machine-guns.

After a time the Germans advanced in extended order, and the change of formation at once made an impression on the defenders. The attack was checked, but not stopped, and before very long Captain Ashburner's company was very hard pressed. The position was equally desperate away to the left, at the Ghlin bridge, where Captain Bying was having a most anxious time. Here, again, the pressure from sheer weight of numbers was tremendous. But though the Germans made considerable headway they could not gain the bridges, and their dead and wounded lay in heaps all along the approach to the bridge.

It was at the Ghlin bridge that Godley was working a machine-gun, and, like Lieutenant Dease, he stuck to his post to the end, doing

frightful havoc in the German ranks. He was wounded in the afternoon, but, with great coolness and gallantry, continued fighting his machine-gun under a hot fire for two hours more.

The defenders of the Ghlin bridge had most valuable support from the 107th Battery of the Royal Field Artillery, which was entrenched behind them; and from the firing-line an artillery observer communicated with great accuracy the enemy's range to his battery. The action at this point, however, will be chiefly memorable for the way in which Godley won his well-merited V.C.

How Major Ernest Wright Alexander, of the 119th Battery, Royal Field Artillery, won the V.C. at Elouges.

On the retreat of the British Army, after the Battle of Mons, the 119th Battery of the Royal Field Artillery, which was under the command of Major, now Lieutenant-Colonel, Ernest Wright Alexander, took up a position behind a railway embankment at Elouges. Sir John French was determined to show a bold front to the enemy, and this and another battery were therefore

placed where they could most effectively shell the Germans in their advance, and break up attempts by them to harass, with their overwhelming numbers, the British retreat. In these actions the British artillery did splendid work again and again throughout the Great Retreat, and, as a consequence, the Germans suffered enormous losses.

Hard pressed during the Battle of Mons, the 1st Corps had been forced to give ground, and it was here, on the right of the British Army, that the first German advance was expected. To check this attack Sir John French determined on the plan of threatening the enemy with a counter-attack, during which Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien was to fall back some way, then halt and draw up his army in battle line. The 1st Corps would then retire to a new position behind this line, and in the same way the operations would be repeated by the 2nd Corps.

On the evening of the battle the greater part of the 2nd Corps had taken up its new line, running through Montreuil, Boussu, Wasmes, Paturages and Frameries, but brigades at either end, the 14th and 15th on the left, and the 8th on the right, remained in their old positions till midnight.

By night the Germans had thrown pontoon bridges across the Mons Canal, and it was evident that they were advancing in great force in the direction of Frameries, Paturages, and Wasmes. Realizing that the 3rd Division, that on the right of the 2nd Corps, had been too much knocked about already to hold its position unaided against the advancing Germans, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien obtained the assistance of the 5th Brigade (1st Corps), half of which remained in Frameries, while the other half moved to Paturages.

Before long, however, a change had to be made. It had been obvious to all that the first line in the Mons salient could not be held for long, but it was hoped that the line now occupied could be successfully defended. To his surprise, however, Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien received orders at 2 a.m. to abandon it, as the French on the right were retreating. This change involved grave difficulties in the transport service, and heavy rearguard actions seemed inevitable, but after occupying Paturages, the Germans made no immediate attempt to follow up the British.

A terrific struggle was in progress at Wasmes, however. The Germans attacked the town at

ten o'clock, and a surprise awaited them. The market square and the streets to either side were lined with British troops, and the moment the heads of the German columns came in sight they were met with a blaze of fire from rifles and machine-guns. Their losses were enormous, but they advanced time after time. They made no headway, however, during two hours' fighting, and the British, having fulfilled their duty as a rearguard, withdrew to St. Vaast.

The retirement at the extreme left of the British line was effected with greater difficulty than at Wasmes, owing to the closer presence of the enemy. Soon after half-past eleven an urgent message was received from Sir Charles Fergusson, who was in command of the 5th Division, saying that he could not extricate his division from its position unless prompt help was given by cavalry. On receiving this message, General de Lisle, who was at Andregnies, sent off the 18th Hussars to the high ground along the Quiverain to Elouges road.

At this time the 119th Battery of the Royal Field Artillery was south-west of Elouges, while "L" Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery was north-east of Andregnies. Both were on the main road to Angre, and about three miles apart.

The 4th Dragoon Guards and 9th Lancers were in Andregnies itself.

No sooner had General de Lisle made his dispositions than German columns were seen advancing from the direction of Quiverain towards Andregnies. General de Lisle then informed the 4th Dragoon Guards and the 9th Lancers that the enemy's advance must be stopped at all costs, if necessary by a charge.

The two regiments advanced towards the enemy, who were two thousand yards away, but, when on the point of charging, they found themselves held up by a wire fence. With great presence of mind, however, the cavalry wheeled to the right and took cover behind some big slag heaps. Dismounting, they opened a hot fire, with the support of the two batteries on the Angre road. For four hours the fight was kept up, and then, having achieved his object, General de Lisle withdrew the dismounted men.

It was during one of these withdrawals that Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander, in company with Captain Francis Grenfell, of the 9th Lancers, won the V.C. The flank guard of the 119th Battery of the Royal Field Artillery was attacked by a whole German corps; and during the

attack the battery's horses were all killed, and almost every man was killed or wounded.

But, notwithstanding this, Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander handled his battery with such conspicuous success that all his guns were saved. He and three other men had begun to withdraw them by hand when Captain Francis Grenfell came to his assistance. It was due to the conspicuous bravery and great ability of Major Alexander that the retirement of the 5th Division was carried out without serious loss. Later, he crowned his achievement by running out and rescuing a wounded man under heavy fire.

How Captain Francis Octavius Grenfell, of the 9th Lancers, won the V.C. near Doubon.

During the retreat from Mons the only reserve which Sir John French had at his disposal was General Allenby's cavalry division, but gallantly did our splendid horsemen respond to all the calls made upon them, sacrificing themselves with the most devoted bravery to stem the advance of the German hordes.

About 7.30 a.m. on the morning of August 24th —the day on which the retreat began—Sir Charles

Fergusson, who was holding the village of Frameries with the right of the 5th Division, found that the enemy were endeavouring to work round his flank between Frameries and Mons, and sent word to General Allenby that he was very hard pressed and in urgent need of support. On receipt of this message, Allenby at once brought up his cavalry to the menaced point, and for a little while succeeded in holding the outflanking movement in check.

The first of the cavalry to go into action were the three regiments of the 2nd Brigade—the 4th Dragoon Guards, the 9th Lancers, and the 18th Hussars, who began by a dismounted action with the German infantry at a range of over a thousand yards near the village of Andregnies. Then General de Lisle, who commanded the brigade, ordered the 9th Lancers to mount and charge the flank of the advancing masses, with the other two regiments as supports.

Joyfully did these splendid fellows obey the order. All the previous day, while the Battle of Mons had been raging, they had been within sound of the fighting, yet not permitted to take any part in it; and though exchanging rifle-volleys with the Huns had come as a welcome relief from their enforced inactivity, it was not

the kind of work for which they were craving. But now at last their chance was to be given them, and singing and shouting in their glee, they dashed forward as light-heartedly as though they had been on parade.

Some of the finest horsemen in Great Britain were amongst them—their commanding officer, Colonel Campbell, the hero of the Grand National of 1896, Captain Noel Edwards and Captain Francis Grenfell, two of the finest polo-players of our time, and many another man who had won distinction at Hurlingham, Sandown, or in the Shires.

But alas ! their gallantry was to effect nothing beyond proving that the spirit which had inspired the Light Brigade at Balaclava is still alive in the British cavalry of to-day. For the ground had been insufficiently reconnoitred, and five hundred yards from the enemy the Lancers found themselves held up by a double line of barbed wire, along which they galloped "like rabbits in front of a line of guns," in a vain attempt to find some way of getting round.

Every moment, beneath the deadly blast of shell and rifle-fire which swept their now broken ranks, men dropped from their saddles, or horses, screaming in agony, came crashing down, until

at last, perceiving the impossibility of reaching the enemy, the remnant of the regiment drew rein behind a house.

But the respite they had thus gained was a very brief one. At once the German guns were turned upon the house, which in a few minutes was nothing but a heap of tangled masonry ; and once more men and horses were exposed to the full blast of the storm, until they finally found refuge under a railway-embankment, near Doubon.

By this time, all the senior officers had been either killed or so severely wounded as to be incapacitated for further service ; and Captain Francis Grenfell, who had kept his squadron together by giving the order to trot, found himself in command. He himself had come by no means scathless through the terrible ordeal which his regiment had undergone, having been badly wounded by shrapnel in the hand and leg ; but his dauntless courage and devotion to duty were to triumph over pain and weakness, and to enable him to perform one of the most heroic actions of the first weeks of the war.

Under the lee of the embankment a battery commandant and some dozen gunners had taken shelter. They belonged to the 119th Battery

of the Royal Field Artillery, which had been put out of action, with the loss of most of its men and all its horses, by the enemy's terrific shell-fire. Captain Grenfell at once determined that an attempt ought to be made to save the abandoned guns, and rode out alone to ascertain if there were any exit for them to the British lines. Some little distance beyond them he discovered a way of retreat, and then coolly walked his horse back to the embankment, amidst a tempest of shot and shell, with the object of minimizing the risk of the undertaking in the eyes of his men.

"We have got to save those guns," said he. "Who's going to volunteer?" and he reminded his men of how the 9th Lancers had saved a battery at Maiwand, and of how in South Africa they had never failed the gunners. Every man at once volunteered, and, leaving their horses behind the embankment, about a score of them, together with the survivors of the battery, ran towards the guns.

"It's all right, they can't hit us," observed Captain Grenfell coolly, and although more than one journey was necessary and they were exposed to a tremendous fire, they succeeded in man-handling the guns into safety, with the loss of only three men wounded, although, as the last

gun was being got away, the German infantry were close upon them.

Captain Grenfell, who was awarded the crown of every soldier's ambition for this most gallant deed, was invalided home, but at the earliest possible moment he rejoined his regiment and greatly distinguished himself in the fight of the dismounted cavalry at Messines, on November 1st, 1914.

Wounded again, this time more severely than before, he once more fought his way back to recovery, but on May 24th, 1915, the 2nd Cavalry Division, among which were the 9th Lancers, were subjected to a violent gas attack by the Germans, the poison cloud rising to forty feet, and the emission continuing for four and a half hours. Throughout the gas and the subsequent heavy shelling which they received, this most hardly-tried regiment stuck gallantly to their trenches, but they paid a heavy toll, and among the dead was Captain Grenfell.

Captain Francis Grenfell was a nephew of Lord Grenfell and a twin-brother of Captain "Rivy" Grenfell, of the Buckinghamshire Yeomanry, who was killed in the charge of the 9th Lancers, to whom he was attached, at the Battle of the Marne, in September, 1914. A

younger brother fell in the brilliant charge of the 12th Lancers at Omdurman, seventeen years ago.

Joining the 9th Lancers in May, 1901, Captain Francis Grenfell served with distinction in the South African War, in which he obtained the Queen's Medal and five clasps. He was promoted captain three years ago. He was one of the best known and most popular officers in the whole Army, a perfect type of the soldier, gentleman and sportsman, and his loss is widely deplored.

How Lance-Corporal George Harry Wyatt, of the 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, won the V.C. at Landrecies.

It was on August 25th, 1914, during the retreat from Mons, that Lance-Corporal George Harry Wyatt, of the 3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, won the V.C. The 4th Guards' Brigade had reached Landrecies at one o'clock in the afternoon, and, being tired out, the men had immediately gone into billets, some in barracks and others in the town.

About five o'clock word was brought that the Germans had begun to advance on the town, and preparations were immediately made for the

defence. The Grenadiers were posted on the western side; the 2nd Coldstream Guards on the south and east; and the 3rd Coldstream to the north and north-west. Meanwhile the Irish Guards barricaded the streets and loop-holed the houses facing the open country.

Shortly after half-past eight infantry was heard advancing from the direction of the Mormal forest, singing French songs as they marched. The sky was very overcast at the time, and darkness had already fallen. But a searchlight, which was turned on the head of the column, revealed French uniforms. The column had come a good deal closer when a second searchlight detected German uniforms behind its leading sections. It was the 9th German Corps.

Pushing forward through darkness and rain, the Germans came in contact with an advance company of the Guards, with a machine-gun, within two hundred yards of the town, and the base act to which they had resorted hardly gave the British time to defend themselves. The man in charge of the gun was bayoneted before he had time to open fire, and the gun itself was captured. A fierce struggle followed in the dark, revolvers and bayonets being freely used, but, overwhelmed by weight of numbers, the Cold-

streams were gradually forced back towards the entrance to the town.

It was a most critical moment, but magnificent discipline prevailed among the British and saved the situation. In a narrow street, known as the Faubourg Soyère, a company was in reserve, and through a heavy fire it was rushed up to the support of the others. The arrival of this company made matters rather more equal as regards numbers, though the columns that had been hurled in the attack against Landrecies were but the vanguard of the German attack, and, as was afterwards revealed, the Germans were throughout in a majority of two to one.

Greatly cheered by the example of their officers, however, the two Coldstream companies now attacked the Germans with great energy, and drove them back with heavy losses to the outskirts of the forest. But from this spot the Germans opened fire with a light field-gun on the Faubourg Soyère, firing shrapnel and star-shells at point-blank range.

Matters were now becoming very trying, as the light of burning houses revealed the position of the defenders to the enemy, and flames suddenly shot up from some straw stacks in a farmyard at the end of the street. If the fire had

spread and occasioned a blaze of light it would have been quite impossible to hold the position. With great courage Lance-Corporal Wyatt twice dashed out of the line, under a very hot fire from the enemy, who were only twenty-five yards away, and extinguished the burning straw.

Lance-Corporal Wyatt's act was one involving great personal danger, and he again displayed most conspicuous bravery a week later at Villers Cotterets. On that occasion he was wounded in the head, but continued firing until he could no longer see, owing to the blood which was pouring down his face. He then retired to the dressing-station, and when the medical officer had bound up his wound, he told him to go to the rear. Lance-Corporal Wyatt returned at once to the firing-line, however, and continued to take part in the fighting. For his great gallantry on both occasions he was fittingly rewarded with the V.C.

How Major Charles Allix Lavington Yate, of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), won the V.C. at Le Cateau.

It may be said, quite fairly, that the world has rarely seen an army of such great merit as that

which shouldered the burden of Great Britain during the first six months of the war in Flanders and Northern France. Though the army was small in numbers, the men held inviolate the heritage of their race, great courage and tenacity of purpose. These qualities alone, however, would not have sufficed in view of the tremendous odds to which the men were opposed. Added to a superb morale was physical fitness.

To maintain the latter, athletics had been widely encouraged in the Army, amongst both officers and rank and file. Further, the methods of training the infantry followed the theory of fighting in open order, and aimed at making each man an individual fighter, who was to depend on himself in the battle-line. With so much of first-rate importance combined in the making of each soldier, it is small wonder that the Army which crossed to France in August, 1914, should have proved so redoubtable a fighting force.

The most conspicuous act of bravery for which Major Charles Allix Lavington Yate, of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), was awarded the V.C. recalls in its dramatic circumstances the heroic defence of

Thermopylæ, where Leonidas, the Spartan King, with three hundred of his men, opposed the Persian army of Xerxes.

In the battle of Le Cateau on August 26th, 1914, Von Klück first tried to break the British line by frontal attacks and by a turning movement against the left flank. Later on, however, he used his great hordes of men in an enveloping movement on both flanks.

The position was extremely critical, and at half-past three Sir John French gave the order for the British to retire. B Company, of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), which Major Yate commanded, was in the second line of trenches, where it suffered fearful losses from the enemy's shell-fire, which was directed against one of the British batteries not far behind.

Of the whole battalion, indeed, no less than twenty officers and six hundred men were lost during the battle, and when the German infantry advanced with a rush in the afternoon, there were only nineteen men left unwounded in Major Yate's company. But, with splendid courage and tenacity, they held their ground and continued firing until their ammunition was all exhausted. At the last Major Yate led his little

party of nineteen survivors in a deathless charge against the enemy.

But though courage and discipline prevailed, there could be but one result. Major Yate fell, seriously wounded—to subsequently die, a prisoner of war in Germany—and his gallant band of men ceased to exist.

How Captain Douglas Reynolds and Drivers J. H. C. Drain and F. Luke, of the Royal Field Artillery, won the Victoria Cross by saving a Gun at Le Cateau.

On the morning of the 24th August, 1914, the retreat of the British from Mons began, and on the 26th Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien fought his famous action at Le Cateau, which saved the left wing of the Army from being enveloped and cut off.

Smith-Dorrien had little time to entrench his position before the grey masses of the enemy's infantry were seen advancing, supported by the fire of some six hundred guns, on a front of about twelve miles. He had no reserves available, and could only strengthen a threatened part of his line by taking the risk of weakening another part of it.

Heavy, indeed, was our men's task that day, and that of the artillery was the heaviest of all. Opposed to four times their number of guns—and guns, for the most part, of much heavier calibre than their own—their losses in men and horses were appalling. In one battery, towards the end of the fight, only a lieutenant and one gunner remained, still heroically contriving to keep a single gun in action. Several pieces were disabled by the huge shells from the German field howitzers, while the carriages of others were smashed to atoms.

As the day wore on, Von Klück began to use his superior numbers in a great enveloping movement on both flanks, and between three and four o'clock in the afternoon the British received orders to retire. The movement was covered by our artillery with the most splendid courage, but at a terrible cost; and it was at this moment that the incident we are about to relate occurred.

Captain Douglas Reynolds, of the 37th Battery, R.F.A., perceiving that the horses attached to several guns had all been killed or disabled, brought up two teams, driven by men who had volunteered their services, in a desperate attempt to save a couple of them.

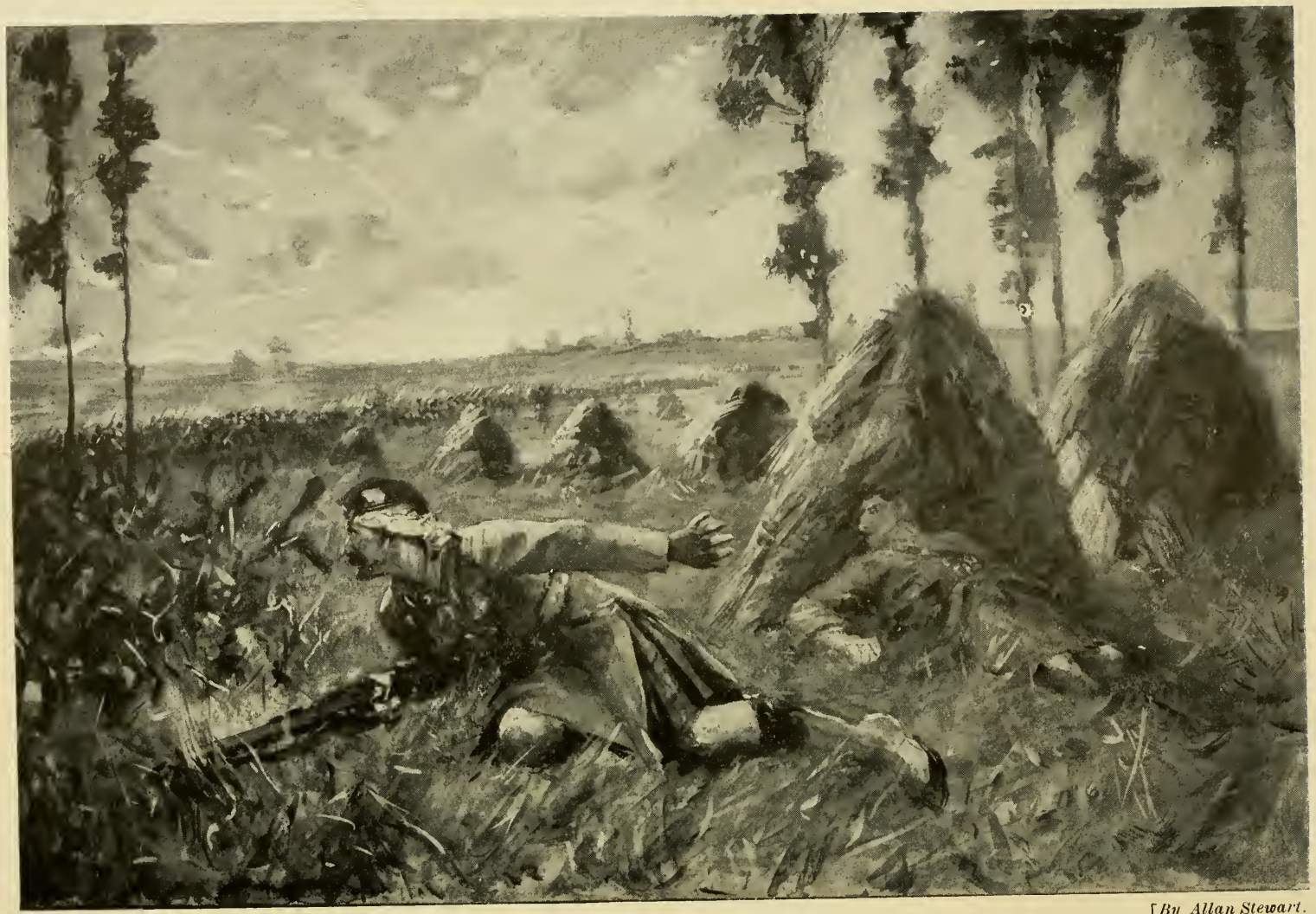
Though exposed to very heavy shell and rifle-

[*By John de G. Bryan.*

Painted specially for this work]

Captain D. Reynolds and Drivers J. H. C. Drain and F. Luke saving a gun at Le Cateau.

[*Facing p.* 30.



[*By Allan Stewart.*

Painted specially for this work]

Private Ross Tollerton returns from the firing-line, after being wounded, to await an opportunity for carrying to the British lines a severely wounded officer.

fire—the advancing German infantry were scarcely a hundred yards distant—these brave men contrived to limber up two guns. But, the next moment, one entire team was shot down, while Driver Gobley, the driver of the centre pair of the other team, fell dead from his saddle. Captain Reynolds, however, rode alongside the unguided pair, and kept them in hand, and with Driver Luke driving the leaders, and Driver Drain the wheelers, the gun was brought safely out of action.

Each of these three heroes was awarded the Victoria Cross, and one of them, Captain Reynolds, had the satisfaction of distinguishing himself again a fortnight later at the Battle of the Marne, when, reconnoitring at close range, he located a battery which was holding up our advance and silenced it. Unhappily, he was severely wounded at the Aisne on September 15th, 1914.

How Lance-Corporal Frederick William Holmes, of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), won the V.C. at Le Cateau.

At daybreak on the morning of August 26th, 1914, it was seen that the Germans intended to

throw the greater part of their strength against the left of the position occupied by the 2nd Corps and the 4th Division at Le Cateau. The guns of no less than four German Army Corps were in position against them, and Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien reported that, in face of such an attack, he considered it impossible to continue his retirement at daybreak, as had been ordered.

Sir John French, however, sent word that he was unable to offer him any support. The 1st Corps was at the moment incapable of movement, and the French Cavalry Corps, under General Sordêt, could not come up and support a retirement, owing to the fatigue of the horses; and Sir John French therefore sent orders to Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien to do his utmost to break off the action and retire at the earliest possible moment. The battle, which was about to begin, was, however, most fiercely contested, and it was not until the afternoon that the retirement was begun.

The British front extended for about eight miles, and for half that distance ran along the north side of the Cambrai to St. Quentin railway, but there had been no time to entrench the position properly. Of the trenches which had been prepared many faced the wrong way, and

all were too short, and, though it was possible to lengthen those which were short, the others had to be re-dug.

The ground was very hard and there were no entrenching tools, but the men succeeded in obtaining picks from the farms, and with these they set to work. Without shovels, however, their task was very arduous, and they had to scoop up the loose earth with mess-tins or with their hands. The trenches constructed by such rough and ready methods naturally offered but a poor defence against the terrific shell-fire to which they were presently subjected, and, when the infantry lined them, they were bombarded for six hours on end.

The battle was chiefly a duel between artillery, and up to midday it was that alone. It was a most unequal contest for the British gunners, who were outmatched by at least four to one. But after some time they directed their fire more at the infantry than at the opposing batteries. Enormous losses were thus inflicted on the Germans, who were massing on the crest of a ridge, two thousand yards away, and advancing in a succession of lines down a slope to hidden ground.

By the afternoon, however, many of the British

batteries had been silenced, and the infantry in their makeshift trenches became a mere target for the German guns. It was a terrible ordeal, which could only arise when the artillery of one side was completely outnumbered by that of the other. With an absolute disregard of danger, Sir Charles Fergusson, the Divisional General, galloped about amid bursting shells, exhorting the men of the 5th Division to stand firm. Some of them, however, were beginning to withdraw, for the awful gun-fire and the lack of proper cover were too much for their endurance. At half-past two the right flank of the division had been turned, and the enemy began to press forward into the gap between the two army corps.

Word was sent that the division could hold its ground no longer, but Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien sent up every available reserve he had, namely, two battalions and a battery. These helped to some extent; but it at length became apparent that to avoid complete annihilation a retirement must be attempted.

At about half-past three, therefore, the order was given for the general retirement to commence. When the movement began the artillery covered it with most devoted courage and

determination. As the men fell back the British gunners began to drop their shells on to the German infantry, causing heavy losses and effectively preventing them from following up and engaging in demoralizing attacks on the retreating British.

The 3rd and 4th Divisions withdrew in fairly good order, but the retirement of the 5th Division was more irregular. The regiments which stood their ground to the last were isolated by the withdrawal of units on their left and right, and in consequence suffered very severely, being mown down by shrapnel and machine-gun fire the moment they left their trenches.

While the retirement was in progress Lance-Corporal Frederick William Holmes, of the 2nd Battalion, The King's Own (Yorkshire Light Infantry), picked up a wounded man, who was lying in the trenches, and most gallantly carried him over a mile under heavy fire. Later on he assisted to drive a gun out of action by taking the place of a driver who had been wounded. For the most conspicuous bravery which he had shown in these two emergencies he was deservedly rewarded with the V.C.

How Captain Edward Kinder Bradbury, Sergeant David Nelson and Battery Sergeant-Major George Thomas Dorrell, "L" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, won the V.C. at Nery.

Having discussed matters with General Joffre, Sir John French renewed the retreat of his army on the afternoon of Saturday, August 29th, 1914. To meet present circumstances the original plans of General Joffre had to be modified, and the British now moved towards the line of the river Aisne, from Soissons to Compiègne, and then in the direction of the Marne about Meaux.

On the night of August 31st the Bays and "L" Battery of the Royal Horse Artillery bivouacked in an open orchard on the west side of the village of Nery. The village lies low in the midst of broken and hilly country. To the south and east the ground rises suddenly and very steeply, and on the heights Lieutenant Tailby, of the Hussars, was patrolling in the early morning of September 1st. A thick fog hung over the ground, and besides shutting out the view, it muffled every sound. Neverthe-

less, he groped along, stopping every now and again to listen, but neither hearing the enemy nor seeing any signs of them.

Then, all of a sudden, a whole column of German cavalry loomed out of the fog. Lieutenant Tailby was seen, and turning his horse abruptly round, he galloped off to warn the brigade. He had just time enough to dash in and raise the alarm, and then shot and shell began to fall thickly upon the village. About five o'clock the fog cleared, and away on the heights could be seen the six German regiments, dismounted, with their twelve guns. The advantage in an engagement would be greatly on the side of the Germans, both as regards numbers and the position which they held. But the British gallantly resolved to fight.

Three only of the battery's guns could be brought into action, and these quickly opened fire. After getting their horses into safety, the Bays, who were in the line of fire, joined in with rifles and machine-guns. The three guns kept up their fire amidst a storm of shot and shell, but the range was only four hundred yards, and two of them were quickly knocked out of action.

Captain Bradbury, who was in command, had a leg blown off by a shell, but with the utmost

bravery he propped himself up and continued to direct the fire till he fell dead. Both Lieutenant Campbell and Brigade-Major Cawley died beside him, the latter after bringing up orders from Headquarters. Lieutenants Gifford and Mundy were both wounded, and then, amidst a storm of fire from field-guns, maxims, and rifles, Sergeant-Major Dorrell took command. He was supported by Sergeant Nelson, who, though severely wounded, refused to retire, and also by Gunner Darbyshire and Driver Osborne.

While they kept the last gun in action, the 5th Dragoon Guards worked round to the north-east, to make a diversion from that flank. They succeeded to a certain extent, but Colonel Ansell fell, shot through the head, at the very commencement. Without reinforcements they could do no more than make a demonstration, and for a time the situation was doubtful.

But the 4th Cavalry Brigade suddenly arrived on the scene. Dismounting from their horses, they at once joined up with the 5th Dragoon Guards, and the combined regiments then poured a steady fire into the enemy's flank. Finding that their position was getting rather hot, the Germans attempted to man-handle their guns out of action. A steady fire, however, was

poured into their flank by the cavalry, and the Bays, who had mounted a machine-gun in a sugar factory to the west of the village, attacked them with a frontal fire.

This proved too much for them, and, abandoning eight guns and a maxim, they made off towards Verrines. The engagement had now been in progress a little over an hour, but to cap the victory the 11th Hussars sprang on to their horses and dashed off in pursuit. Fifty horses and a number of prisoners were brought back, and the German casualties in killed and wounded proved to be considerable.

Of just over two hundred officers and men of "L" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, only forty survived, but their magnificent courage and tenacity saved a serious situation and, later, greatly helped towards the enemy's defeat. For their most gallant services, V.C.'s were awarded to Captain Bradbury, Sergeant-Major Dorrell and Sergeant, now Lieutenant, Nelson.

How Captain William Henry Johnstone, of the Royal Engineers, won the V.C. at Missy.

The crossing of the Aisne began on September 13th, 1914, along a section of the river

which lay between Soissons on the west and Villers on the east. Along this part of the river there are eleven road-bridges, but those at Venizel, Missy and Vailly had been destroyed by the Germans. The Aisne valley, which runs east and west, is flat-bottomed and varies from a mile to two miles wide. The river is about one hundred and seventy feet wide, but, being fifteen feet deep in the middle, it is impossible to ford it.

The slopes, which rise up to a height of four hundred feet on either side of the valley, are covered with patches of wood, and are broken up by numerous spurs. The position held by the enemy was a very strong one, being a plateau on the heights to the north of the river, and from it all the bridges could be brought under either the direct fire of field-guns or else the high-angle fire of heavy howitzers.

Orders having been given to advance and cross the Aisne, the 1st Corps and the cavalry advanced on the river. The 1st Division, which was directed to take its stand about Chanouille, pushed forward by way of the canal bridge at Bourg, while the 2nd Division, which was destined for Courteçon and Presles, and for the canal to the north of Braye, followed routes

through Pont-Arcy and Chavonne. The cavalry and 1st Division met with but slight opposition on the right, and by means of the canal, which crosses the river by an aqueduct, found a passage. The division was thus able to push on, with the Cavalry Division on its outer flank, and drive back the enemy before it.

The leading troops of the 2nd Division reached the river on the left by nine o'clock. By means of a broken girder of the bridge, which was not completely submerged in the river, the 5th Infantry Brigade crossed under fire from the enemy's guns on the heights. The crossing having been accomplished, a pontoon-bridge was at once begun, and was completed by five o'clock in the afternoon.

Out on the extreme left the 4th Guards' Brigade met with most determined opposition at Chavonne, and it was not till late in the afternoon that a foothold was gained on the northern bank of the river, by ferrying a battalion across in boats. At night almost the entire division bivouacked on the southern bank of the river, and only the 5th Brigade was left on the north bank, for the purpose of establishing a bridgehead.

Almost all the bridges which lay in the path

of the advance of the 2nd Corps were found to have been destroyed, except that at Condé, which the enemy held in their possession until the end of the battle. The 5th Division eventually crossed the Aisne at Missy. From the river, however, the ground stretches back flat and exposed for three-quarters of a mile, and the 13th Brigade was unable to advance, as the enemy opened a heavy fire from the opposite bank.

The 14th Brigade, however, was directed to the east of Venizel, and was rafted across at a less exposed point. The 15th Brigade followed, and later both the 14th and 15th Brigades assisted the 4th Division on their left to repel a heavy counter-attack delivered against the 3rd Corps. On the morning of the 13th the enemy was found to be in possession of the Vregny plateau.

The Engineers then undertook the repair of the road-bridge at Venizel, and the work was completed during the morning. The bridge, however, had been damaged to such an extent that it was left to the men to drag the guns across. In the meantime, a pontoon-bridge was begun close to the road-bridge, and this was completed at 5.30 p.m.

The 12th Infantry Brigade had crossed at Venizel, and by one o'clock in the afternoon was assembled at Bucy le Long. At 2 p.m. it began an attack in the direction of Chivres and Vregny, in the hope of gaining the high ground east of Chivres and thus continuing the advance further northwards. Good progress was made until 5.30 p.m., but the enemy's artillery and machine-gun fire then became so heavy that further progress could not be made.

While the 10th Infantry Brigade crossed the river and moved to Bucy le Long, the 19th Brigade moved to Billy-sur-Aisne. Before dark all the artillery of the division had been got across the river, except for the Heavy Battery and one brigade of Field Artillery. During the night the 5th Division took over the positions, to the east of the stream running through Chivres, which had been gained by the 12th Infantry Brigade.

With the fall of evening the enemy had retired at every point and entrenched on the high ground about two miles to the north of the river. But detachments of infantry were strongly entrenched in commanding places all down the slopes of the various spurs, with powerful artillery to support them.

All through the night of the 13th and on the 14th and following days, the field companies were incessantly at work. Eight pontoon-bridges and one foot-bridge were thrown over the river, under very heavy artillery fire, and this was kept up continuously on most of the crossings after they had been completed. The three road-bridges at Venizel, Missy and Vailly, and a railway bridge east of Vailly, were repaired for foot traffic.

The work done by the Royal Engineers was highly satisfactory, in repairs and reconstruction and in other ways. All through the 14th until 7 p.m. Captain William Henry Johnstone worked with his own hands two rafts. He returned with the wounded from one side, to take back later supplies of ammunition. By this work, which was carried out under heavy fire, an advanced brigade was enabled to maintain its position across the river. For his most gallant work Captain Johnstone was awarded the V.C.

How Sergeant William Fuller, of the 2nd Battalion, Welsh Regiment, won the Victoria Cross at the Battle of the Aisne.

On Sunday, September 13th, 1914, the greater part of the British Expeditionary Force crossed the Aisne, and by the evening our men had dug themselves in well up on the farther slopes; and early next morning, while our Engineers were busily strengthening the new bridges and repairing some of the old, which the Germans had partially destroyed, so as to enable them to bear the weight of heavy traffic, a general advance was begun along the whole western section of the Allied front.

On the part of the British, the real offensive was entrusted to the 1st Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig, which had bivouacked on the northern bank of the river, between Chavonne and Moulins. Its objective was the Chemin des Dames, or Ladies' Road, four miles to the north, the possession of which would give us command of the southern part of the Craonne plateau from Soissons to Berry-au-Bac.

The 2nd Brigade, supported by the 25th

Artillery Brigade, was to push forward from Moulins, on the extreme right, and seize a spur east of the hamlet of Troyon, just south of the Ladies' Road; while the remaining two brigades of the 1st Division advanced up the Vendresse valley—the 6th Brigade, in the 2nd Division, was to occupy the Ladies' Road south of Courtaçon; while the rest of the division advanced up the Braye glen, and the 4th (Guards') Brigade, on its left, supported by the 36th Artillery Brigade, took the heights east of Ostel.

The movement began just before dawn, and the 1st Northamptons captured the spur east of Troyon at the point of the bayonet. But a desperate resistance was encountered at Troyon itself, where there was a sugar-factory held in strong force by the enemy, and it was not until midday that it was carried by the 1st North Lancashires, when the 1st and 2nd Brigades were drawn up on the line just south of the Ladies' Road. The 3rd Brigade continued the line west of Vendresse and linked up with the 2nd Division, which had met with such fierce opposition that its right was hung up south of Braye, while its left was still some way from the Ostel ridge.

About four o'clock in the afternoon a general

advance of the 1st Corps was ordered, and by nightfall, though we had not succeeded in occupying the Ladies' Road, we had, in the words of Viscount French, "gained positions which alone have enabled me to maintain my position for more than three weeks of very severe fighting on the north bank of the river." But this success was not won without heavy losses, especially among the commissioned ranks of the 1st Corps, the colonels of four of its twelve battalions—those of the 1st Black Watch, 2nd Royal Sussex, 1st North Lancashires and 1st West Surreys—being all killed.

The 3rd Brigade, in capturing the village of Chivy, had a particularly severe task, the enemy being in immensely superior force and very strongly posted. As the 2nd Welsh, in the centre, advancing by sections, neared the crest of the hill behind which lay the village, Captain Mark Haggard, a nephew of Sir Rider Haggard, ordered his men to lie down, and advanced alone to reconnoitre the German position. Then he turned and shouted: "Fix bayonets, boys!" and the Welshmen, rising to their feet, dashed forward, to be met by a withering machine-gun and rifle-fire.

Calling on his men to follow him, Captain

Haggard, who carried, like them, rifle and bayonet, rushed forward to capture a Maxim gun, which was doing considerable damage. But just before he reached it, he was struck by several bullets, and fell to the ground mortally wounded.

" Near me," writes a private of the 2nd Welsh, who had himself been struck down almost at the same moment, " was lying our brave Captain, mortally wounded. As the shells burst over us, he would occasionally open his eyes, between the spasms of pain, and call out weakly : ' Stick it, Welsh ! ' "

Seeing Captain Haggard fall, Sergeant William Fuller ran forward, under tremendous fire, and, lifting him up, carried him back about one hundred yards, until he gained the shelter of a ridge, where he laid him down and dressed his wounds. Captain Haggard begged the Sergeant to fetch his rifle, which he had dropped where he fell, so that the Germans should not get possession of it, and this Fuller succeeded in doing without getting hit.

He then, with the assistance of a private named Snooks and Lieutenant Melvin, the officer in charge of the machine-gun section of the Welsh, carried Captain Haggard to a barn adjoining a

farmhouse some distance to the rear, which was being used as a dressing-station. Here he did what he could to relieve his sufferings, until the evening, when the unfortunate officer expired, his last words being, "Stick it, Welsh!" He was buried close to the farmhouse where he died.

Captain Mark Haggard, whose bravery on the occasion which cost him his life was recognized by the Victoria Cross being conferred upon him posthumously, was the third son of Bayell Michael Haggard, of Kirby Cain, Norfolk, and was born in 1876. On the outbreak of the Boer War he joined the City of London Imperial Volunteers, and went with them to South Africa, and in 1900 received a commission in the 2nd Welsh. He became Captain in 1911. He was immensely popular in his regiment. "We were prepared to follow him anywhere," writes a private of his company.

After Captain Haggard's death, Sergeant Fuller attended to two officers of the 1st South Wales Borderers, Lieutenant the Honourable Fitzroy Somerset and Lieutenant Richards, who were both lying wounded in the same barn, until the ambulance came to remove them. The barn was during this time exposed to very heavy

shell-fire, and the following day, after all our wounded officers and men had been got away, was blown to pieces by the German guns.

He had also under his charge about sixty women and children of the neighbourhood who had taken refuge in the cellar of an adjoining house, and whose wants he supplied until wagons were sent to fetch them away. This house and, in fact, all the neighbouring buildings were subsequently levelled to the ground by the enemy's shell-fire.

Sergeant Fuller, who, for his splendid gallantry, was awarded the Victoria Cross, escaped unhurt on September 14th. About six weeks later (October 29th), during the desperate fighting near Gheluvelt, he was severely wounded by a piece of shrapnel, while dressing the wounds of a comrade named Private Tagge, who had been hit in both legs during the counter-attack by which we recovered most of the trenches from which our 1st Division had been driven earlier in the day. The shrapnel entered the right side, travelled nearly twelve inches up under the shoulder-blade, and rested on the right lung. Sergeant Fuller was sent home to Wales, and was operated on at Swansea Hospital, where the shrapnel was extracted. On his recovery, he was employed

for some months on recruiting duties in Wales, in which he was most successful.

Sergeant Fuller is thirty-two years of age, and was born in Carnarvonshire, but his family has for many years resided at Swansea.

How Private Ross Tollerton, of the 1st Battalion, Cameron Highlanders, won the V.C. at the Battle of the Aisne.

On Sunday, September 13th, 1914, the British, in the face of the fiercest and most determined opposition from the enemy, forced the passage of the Aisne, and before nightfall the bulk of our three Army Corps had crossed the river and entrenched themselves well up on the farther slopes. Early on the following morning, a general advance was begun along the whole western section of the Allied front, the most important offensive movement being that entrusted to our First Corps, under Sir Douglas Haig, which lay between Chavonne and Moulins. Its objective was an important highway called the Chemin des Dames, or Ladies' Road, four miles to the northward, the possession of which would enable us to command the country between Soissons and Berry-au-Bac.

At 4 a.m. the 1st Battalion, Cameron Highlanders, who, with the 1st Coldstreams, 1st Scots Guards and 2nd Black Watch, composed the 1st Brigade, had their breakfasts served out to them; and at dawn—the dawn of a wet, misty morning—the historic red tartans began moving up the Vendresse valley. Among the Camerons was a young Ayrshire man, Private Ross Tollerton, to whom the impending action was to bring the crown of a soldier's ambition.

Passing through the valley, the Camerons mounted the steep ascent to the north, and immediately deployed for action, the company to which Tollerton belonged being in reserve. Presently, however, it advanced and joined up with another company, under Major Maitland, close to the famous three haystacks, south of the hamlet of Troyon. Here the mist lifted somewhat, and they began marching in a north-westerly direction to the support of the 2nd Brigade, which was already heavily engaged, the 1st Scots Guards reinforcing their right. As they advanced, they came under a very heavy shell and machine-gun fire, and Captain Matheson fell, severely wounded. Tollerton raised the wounded officer, and, lifting him on to his back, carried him into an adjoining cornfield, where

he laid him down under cover of a small corn-stack, and then returned to the firing-line.

Scarcely had he rejoined his comrades than he was hit in both the right hand and the right temple. Nevertheless, when presently the Camerons received orders to retire, the brave fellow, without a thought for himself, made his way back to the wounded officer, and lay down beside him, to await a favourable opportunity to carry him back to our lines. He dared not raise his head, for they were surrounded by the enemy, and their snipers would very quickly have picked him off; but he did all he could for his helpless comrade.

Night came on, and he soon recognized that, even under cover of the darkness, it would be impossible to make his way with the wounded man through the German lines undetected, and they were therefore obliged to remain where they were. It was a miserable night, cold and wet, and they had nothing to eat; but, by good fortune, Tollerton's water-bottle was nearly full, so they did not suffer from thirst.

Towards dawn Tollerton saw a strong force of Germans forming up directly in front of where they lay, with the evident intention of making a counter-attack upon the British; and he was

in dread lest they should deploy through the cornfield, in which event he and Captain Matheson would most certainly be discovered. But, to his great relief, they took the road down the valley.

The enemy bombarded our lines nearly all day, and delivered a succession of desperate counter-attacks against our right, all of which were repulsed. However, the fact that the British were obliged to remain on the defensive, and did not attempt any further advance, deprived the two Camerons in the cornfield of all hope of getting away for the present.

The day had been fine and less cold than the preceding one; but towards evening rain came on, and continued intermittently until about nine o'clock on the 16th, with the result that they were soaked to the skin and passed a wretched night. By this time Tollerton was so weak from loss of blood, exposure and hunger—he had eaten nothing since his early breakfast on the 14th—that, even if the road to safety had been open, he would have had difficulty in reaching the British lines himself; while to have carried the wounded officer so far would have been a task altogether beyond his strength. Happily, towards the afternoon, the Germans

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Doraston.*

Private Wilson capturing eight German soldiers who had two British prisoners with them.

[*Facing p.* 54.

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Private Wilson shooting six Germans and capturing their machine-gun.

[*Facing p.* 55.

in that quarter retired, and between four and five o'clock in the afternoon he caught sight of a party of our men digging a trench some distance off. Although now so weak that he could hardly keep his feet, he managed to make his way to them, and the officer in charge had a stretcher fetched for Captain Matheson, and sent Tollerton to the nearest dressing-station.

Private Ross Tollerton, who received the Victoria Cross for his splendid gallantry and devotion, is twenty-six years of age, and his home is at Irvine, Ayrshire.

Captain Matheson, whose life he saved, obtained his commission in the Camerons in 1900, and served with distinction in the South African War, for which he received the Queen's Medal with five clasps.

How Private Wilson, 2nd Battalion, Highland Light Infantry, won the V.C.

Following hard on the tracks of the German hosts defeated in the great Battle of the Marne, the British Army, with its French Allies to right and left, advanced to the river Aisne. There they found the beaten enemy waiting for them, reinforced and supported by a huge number of

heavy guns, originally destined to destroy the defences of Paris. In spite of such formidable obstacles, however, our intrepid soldiers crossed the Aisne under a terrible fire and established themselves firmly on the northern bank. The country at this point is eminently suited for defence, the ground slopes away from the river to a high ridge, which is intersected by a number of ravines. In those ravines are several villages, of which one named Verneuil was the scene of the fine exploit which earned the V.C. for Private Wilson, of the 2nd Highland Light Infantry.

On September 14th, 1914, this latter regiment, with the King's Royal Rifles and the Middlesex Regiment, suffered heavy losses from a hidden machine-gun which they could not locate. Again and again, when they attempted to charge, their line was broken, men went down like nine-pins before the deadly hail, and the survivors were forced to take what cover they could behind haystacks or in ditches.

Searching anxiously for the place where the gun was concealed, Private Wilson detected moving figures in a little wood near the British lines. He reported his suspicions to his officer, who rose to examine the wood through his glasses, but was instantly shot dead. At the

same moment Wilson fired at two figures now more clearly visible, and brought down two German soldiers. Then, springing from his shelter, he dashed towards the wood, hoping to reach the gun before the Germans recovered from the surprise of being detected.

To his own amazement, however, on reaching the brink of a little hollow, he came on a group of eight German soldiers with two British prisoners. Instantly Wilson decided how to act. "Come on, men, charge!" he shouted, as though his regiment was at his heels, and himself rushed down on the little group. His coolness was rewarded—the Germans threw up their hands in prompt surrender, and Wilson had released the two British soldiers and called up his comrades to secure the German prisoners before they realized the trick he had played on them.

But his original object was still to be accomplished; from its hiding-place the machine-gun continued to work havoc in the British ranks, and leaving his prisoners with his comrades, Private Wilson set out once more on his perilous quest. A rifleman of the King's Royal Rifles instantly joined him, and together they pushed forward as rapidly as possible. Soon they were detected and a storm of bullets directed upon them; the

rifleman fell, fatally wounded, but Wilson went on undaunted, dodging the flying bullets and taking advantage of every scrap of shelter that offered.

At last he decided he was near enough to his target, and, partly sheltered by a heap of hay, he took careful aim at the grey figure operating the gun. His first shot took effect, and the German dropped to the ground. Another rose to take his place. The Scotsman fired and again a German went down. Another took his place, but only to share his fate. Wilson's aim was as accurate as though he were at the butts; with six shots he brought down, one after another, the six Germans who were operating the deadly gun. Then he rushed forward to secure his prize, only to be confronted by a German officer, who rose suddenly from his hiding-place and fired at Wilson point-blank with his revolver. Luckily he missed—Wilson's bayonet ran him through, and the gun which had slain scores of his friends was at last in the hands of the gallant Scot, who had risked his own life so freely to secure it.

For his cool and courageous conduct, Private Wilson was awarded the V.C., and surely the coveted distinction was never better earned.

How Lance-Corporal Frederick William Dobson, of the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, won the V.C. at Chavonne.

Towards the end of September, 1914, the worst fury of the Battle of the Aisne had passed away, and operations began to stagnate. The country of the Aisne ceased to be a battlefield where rival armies strove for position, and instead it became the scene of parallel lines of trenches, in which two armies barred the progress of each other during a state of mutual siege.

As the distance between the hostile trenches steadily decreased, warfare was restricted to sniping and construction work. With each succeeding day the position seemed more and more certain to result in a deadlock, as trenches were made deeper and more secure, and entanglements were raised which still further lessened the possibility of surprise or assault.

Notwithstanding the risks attending any movements between the two lines of trenches, the men of the British Army showed themselves to be possessed of coolness and courage for the most daring exploits. Trench warfare was actively

carried on all along the lines; and though the minor operations, which it comprised, did not offer material for the study of strategy and tactics, they were often full of thrilling interest, and deeds were performed which will live long in the memory of the Army. The last days of the Battle of the Aisne were illuminated by an individual act of very remarkable courage.

At Chavonne, on September 28th, 1914, three men were sent out to reconnoitre from a point in the British lines known as the Tunnel Post. There was a very thick mist to conceal them, but it was a most risky undertaking, as the German lines were quite close.

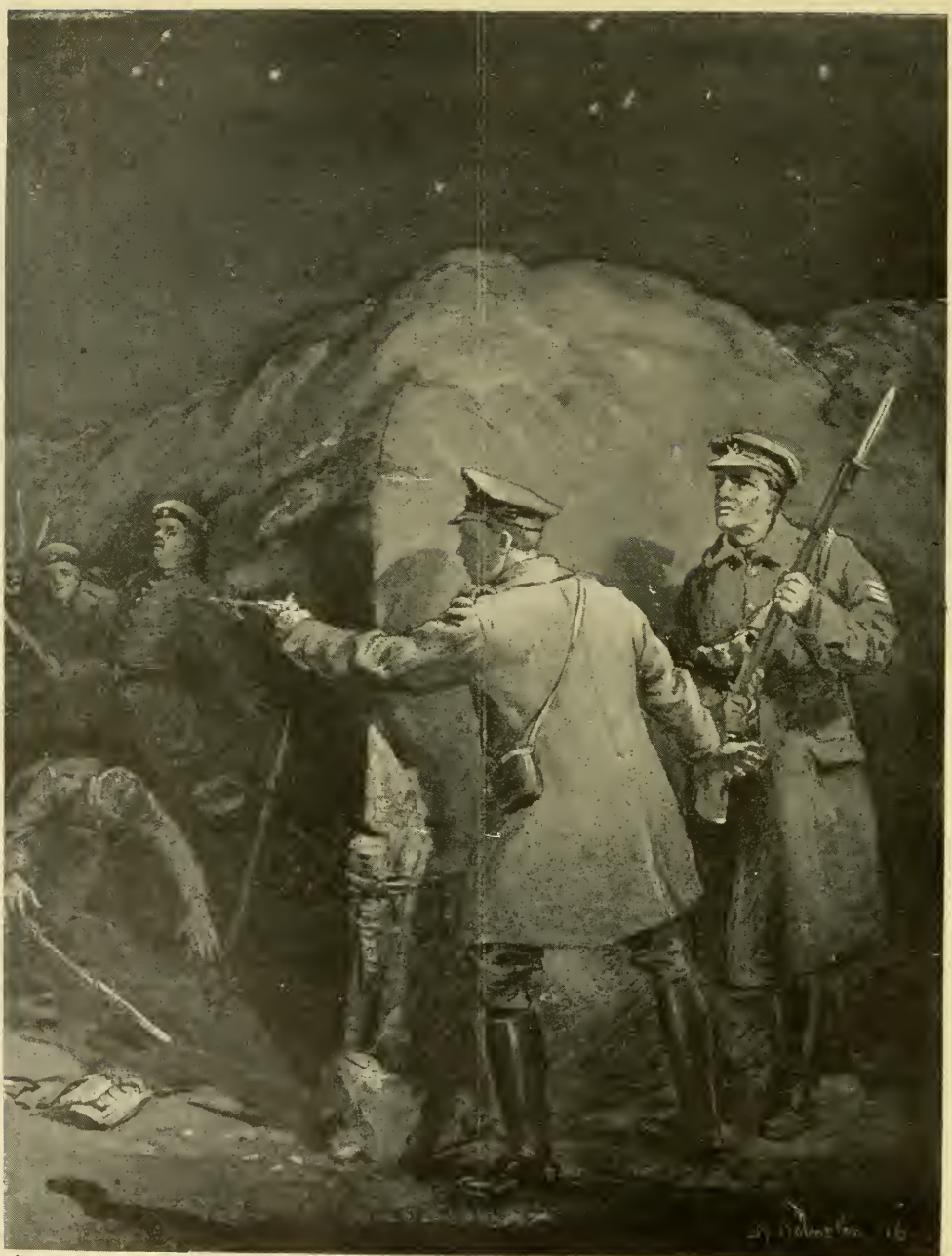
Suddenly the mist lifted, and two of the men were instantly shot. The third, however, got back with only a graze. To leave the two men where they lay meant that they must remain exposed for fourteen hours, until they could be brought in under cover of the darkness.

Private Dobson, of the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, therefore volunteered to try and bring them in at once. As he would have to cross a stretch of open ground in full view of the enemy, the undertaking appeared to be an absolute impossibility. Dobson, however, started away on his perilous journey. Crawling

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. S. Bagdatopulos.*

Lieutenant J. A. O. Brooke leading a counter-attack through a storm of rifle and machine-gun fire to recapture a lost trench at Ypres.

[*Facing p.* 60.



Painted specially for this work] [By M. Dickson.

Second Lieutenant J. Leach and Sergeant J. Hogan driving the enemy out of a British trench

[*See p.* 64.

his way along, he succeeded in reaching the men, one of whom he found dead, and the other wounded in three places. Having applied first-aid dressings to the wounded man, he then went back.

But a few minutes later he crawled out again, this time accompanied by Corporal Brown, and between them the two men dragged a stretcher. On this the wounded man was placed, and then dragged back into safety, happily, without any of the three being hit on the journey. For this most conspicuous act of gallantry Lance-Corporal Dobson was deservedly rewarded with the V.C., and the bravery of his comrade, Corporal Brown, was recognized by the award of the D.C.M.

How Lieutenant James Anson Otho Brooke, of the 2nd Battalion, The Gordon Highlanders, won the V.C. near Gheluvelt.

A lull in the firing on October 28th, 1914, was the herald of perhaps the greatest struggle of the campaign in the West. The enemy was concentrating his forces for a tremendous attack upon the British lines along the Ypres front, and for five days, from October 29th, the Kaiser was to be present with his troops, to stimulate

them to one supreme effort which would open the coveted road to Ypres.

The Kaiser's presence was signalized on the morning of the 29th by a grand assault along, and on either side of, the Menin Road; and the six regiments in the front line, which met the full force of the attack, were the Black Watch, 1st Coldstream Guards and 1st Scots Guards to the north of the road, and the 1st Grenadiers, 2nd Gordons and 2nd Scots Fusiliers to the south. In reserve there were the Border Regiment in Gheluvelt, and the 2nd Scots Guards to the south of it.

At 5.30 a.m. the Germans began their advance under cover of a thick fog. On getting past the first line without a shot being fired, they stationed their machine-guns in the houses by the roadside in the rear. Then, without any warning, the British regiments on the immediate right and left of the road found themselves assailed by a storm of bullets from machine-guns in flank and rear, and to add to the unpleasantness of the situation, they were vigorously shelled by our own artillery.

The 1st Grenadiers, who were stationed immediately to the south of the road, suffered very severely. The firing appeared to come

from the direction of the British reserves, but the thick fog made it very difficult to accurately locate the enemy, or to return their fire. Captain Rasch, who was now in command, decided therefore to withdraw the battalion into the woods to the south, and with them went the left flank of the Gordons, under Captain Burnett.

The Germans were thus left to continue firing upon the trenches, but when the fog suddenly lifted the situation became clear. They ceased firing upon the empty trenches, and began to advance southwards from the road, and also westward. The 1st Grenadiers and Captain Burnett's company of the Gordons at once came out of the wood, and having formed up, charged and drove the enemy back to the road in disorder. At the moment, however, when victory seemed to be theirs, they were enfiladed from the trench which Captain Burnett's company had recently occupied. A great many were put out of action, and the survivors again fell back to the south, closely followed by the enemy.

Throughout the morning the line swayed to and fro. Once again the Grenadiers and Gordons reformed and drove the enemy back to the road. But just as our men were being pushed back

once more by superior numbers, Lieutenant James Anson Otho Brooke, of the 2nd Battalion, The Gordon Highlanders, who had been sent with a message from the right flank, arrived on the scene. Seeing the overwhelming superiority in numbers of the enemy, and knowing that a general counter-attack could not have been organized to prevent the Germans from breaking through our line, Lieutenant Brooke, with great coolness and decision, at once gathered a handful of men, consisting of servants, cooks and orderlies, from the rear. Amidst a hail of rifle and machine-gun fire, he led them forward, and after a second attack the lost trench was recaptured. Unhappily, however, Lieutenant Brooke was killed, as also were nearly all his men, but his most gallant services were promptly recognized by a posthumous award of the V.C.

How Second Lieutenant James Leach and Sergeant John Hogan, of the 2nd Battalion, The Manchester Regiment, won the V.C. at Festubert.

By the end of the third week in October, 1914, our 2nd Corps, which had crossed the Béthune–La Bassée Canal some days pre-

viously, had fought their way through the difficult country to the north-east of it until they held a line pivoting on Givenchy, in the south, and then running east in a salient north of the La Bassée road, to the village of Herlies, whence it bent westwards to Aubers.

The 5th Division, which included the 14th Brigade, in which were the 2nd Manchesters, was on the right; the 3rd Division to the north of it. The strength of the two divisions amounted to some thirty thousand men. Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien's aim had been to get astride the La Bassée–Lille road, in the neighbourhood of Fournes, and so, with the help of the French 10th Army, to isolate the enemy on the high ground south of La Bassée. But he was not then aware how overwhelming were the forces opposed to him, and he was soon obliged to forgo this plan, and to devote all his energies to holding his ground.

On the morning of the 22nd, the enemy made a determined attack on the southern part of the British line, held by the 5th Division, and drove us out of the village of Violaines, between Givenchy and Lorgies; but a dashing counter-attack, in which the 2nd Manchesters greatly distinguished themselves, prevented their advanc-

ing farther. That night, however, Smith-Dorrien withdrew to a new line running from just east of Givenchy, by Neuve Chapelle to Fauquissart. The Manchesters were posted near Festubert.

On the 24th, the enemy attacked heavily all along this new line, and fierce and obstinate fighting continued with little intermission during the remainder of the month. On the 27th, the Germans, coming on in great force, got into Neuve Chapelle, from the greater part of which, however, they were ejected on the following day, after desperate hand-to-hand fighting, by three native battalions of the Lahore Division of the Indian Corps, who had been brought up to support the exhausted British.

Next morning, on our right at Festubert, the 14th Brigade were fiercely attacked, the trenches of the Manchesters being assailed with especial violence. Second Lieutenant James Leach, a lad of twenty, recently promoted to a commission in the Manchesters from the ranks of the 1st Northamptons, occupied with thirty-four men an advanced trench, which, after being subjected to a very heavy shelling, was attacked by between two and three hundred of the enemy.

The Manchesters put up a right gallant fight, and received the advancing Huns with so

withering a fire that before the latter reached the parapet fully half of them must have fallen. But the odds against our men were still too great to be denied, and, by sheer weight of numbers, the remainder of the Germans succeeded in carrying the position and forcing them to retire down the communication trench to the support trenches, with the loss of about a dozen men.

The position was very important, and the men who had been forced to retire were determined to make every effort to recover it. Headed by Lieutenant Leach and Sergeant John Hogan, a veteran of the South African War, they made with this object two gallant counter-attacks; but the Germans had brought up machine-guns, and each attempt failed.

Two brave failures against a much superior force, strongly posted and assisted by machine-guns, would have left any regiment with its honour intact; but that kind of negative glory did not satisfy Lieutenant Leach. He had made up his mind to retake the position at all costs. He waited until night fell, and then crept cautiously up to ascertain what the Germans were doing.

The result of his reconnaissance was not exactly encouraging, since he found the enemy in the

occupation of three out of the four traverses. He therefore decided to do nothing for the moment, and crept back as quietly as he had come. At eleven o'clock the young officer made another journey of inspection, and on this occasion he found the Germans occupying all the traverses. Thereupon he decided upon action, and, sending for Sergeant Hogan, called for ten volunteers. They were readily forthcoming, and the little party of twelve set out on their perilous enterprise.

Lieutenant Leach conducted his men along the communication trench, which led into the right of the advance trench. They had to crawl all the way, for fear of alarming the Germans. His plan was to push the enemy as far to the left as he could, and entrap them in the cul-de-sac formed by the traverse on the left.

The Germans were taken completely by surprise, and, after some stern bayonet work, the little band succeeded in pushing the enemy into the next traverse. The lieutenant and the sergeant now went forward alone. They had reached a point where the captured trench turned sharply at right angles. Leach was armed with a revolver, and was able to reach his hand round the corner, and fire along

the sections without exposing himself. The Germans, being armed only with rifles, could not shoot without exposing part of their bodies.

Meanwhile, Hogan watched the parapet, to ward off attacks from above, since it was quite possible that the Germans might climb over from the section and shoot the two men from above, or take them in the rear, but nothing untoward happened, and they advanced to the next section. Taking their stand at the next corner, they repeated the manœuvre, Leach being now obliged to fire with his left hand. Another section was won, and then came the advance to a third.

During their progress Hogan put his cap on the end of his rifle, and raised it above the parapet, with the object of letting his comrades behind know how far they had progressed, so that they would not sweep the part of the trench which had been retaken with their fire. All the while the Germans kept up "an inferno of bullets"—to borrow Hogan's own expression, and at places fierce hand-to-hand encounters between them and the two heroes occurred.

But they all ended in the discomfiture of the Huns, who were finally driven along the left traverse until they could get no farther, and

Leach and Hogan had them at their mercy. Then the Germans decided to surrender. Leach was surprised to hear a voice calling in English: "Don't shoot, sir!" The speaker turned out to be one of his own men who had been taken prisoner in the morning. He had been sent by the German officer to say that they wished to surrender.

Proceeding round the corner of the traverse, the young lieutenant found the officer and about fourteen Huns on their knees, with their hands raised in supplication. At sight of him a chorus of "Mercy!" arose—the word these gentry usually employ when cornered by the British. Leach told them to take off their equipment and run into the British main trench. This they did, with all speed, being evidently in fear of being shot down by their comrades in the German trenches.

Leach then learned that two more of his men had been captured by the Germans that morning and that the officer who had just surrendered and who could speak English, had promised them a good time when they were sent to Berlin as prisoners. In all Leach and Hogan killed eight of the enemy, wounded two, and made sixteen prisoners, besides regaining possession of an

important advance trench. For this magnificent work they were each subsequently awarded the Victoria Cross, and well did they deserve the coveted bronze medal. They had been brave as few men have been, and had risked their lives freely at the call of duty.

Lieutenant Leach may be said to have been born in the Army, for his father was colour-sergeant in the King's Royal Lancasters. As a boy he lived in Manchester and attended the Moston Lane Boy School. Some years ago his family removed from Manchester, and young Leach eventually joined the 1st Northamptons. He went to France as a corporal, having received his stripes within six weeks of the war breaking out. He was shortly afterwards promoted sergeant, and on October 1st was gazetted second lieutenant in the 2nd Manchesters.

Sergeant Hogan is thirty years old. He was a postman in Oldham until he rejoined his regiment as a reservist on the outbreak of war. He is a very modest hero. "I only did what others would have done, and what others have done," he remarked. That is the spirit of brave men and of brave deeds.

How Drummer Spencer John Bent, of the 1st Battalion, East Lancashire Regiment, won the V.C. near Le Gheir.

On the night of November 1st–2nd, 1914, a platoon of the 1st East Lancashires, one of the battalions of the 11th Brigade, posted on the left of our 3rd Corps, was holding one of the first-line trenches near Le Gheir, which on the previous day the 4th Division had taken over from the right flank of the 1st Cavalry Division.

Drummer Spencer John Bent, a young soldier who, though belonging to a North Country regiment, hails from East Anglia, and who had been having a particularly strenuous time of it of late, had gone to a dug-out to get some sleep, matters being, for the nonce, comparatively tranquil along this section of our front.

Scarcely, however, had he dozed off than he was awakened by the sound of men hurrying up and down the trench, and, starting up, discovered that his comrades were abandoning it. There was no officer in the trench, and the platoon-sergeant having gone to visit an advance-post, someone had passed the word down the line that

the battalion was to retire, and the men were obeying what they believed to be their orders.

Bent started to follow them; but, remembering that he had left behind him a French trumpet, which he had picked up and carried about with him for some time, he decided to risk the chance of a bullet rather than lose it, and went back to fetch it. When he got into the trench, he caught sight of a man crawling towards him round the corner of a traverse. Thinking that he was a German, he waited until he had come close up to him, and then, holding his rifle to his head, demanded who he was. He found that he was his platoon-sergeant, who told him that no orders to retire had been given.

Bent at once jumped out of the trench, and ran after his comrades to call them back. While thus engaged, an officer came up, and on learning what had happened, told him to fetch some of the men back while he went after others. Eventually they brought them all safely back and awaited developments.

In the early morning, the German artillery shelled them for a few minutes, after which the infantry, evidently under the pleasing illusion that the trench had been abandoned, and that they had only to walk in and take possession,

advanced in mass formation, doing the goose-step. Our men reserved their fire, and meantime a machine-gun was brought up and placed in position. When the unsuspecting Huns were about four hundred yards off, machine-gun and rifle fire was poured into them, mowing them down in heaps, and speedily changing their stately goose-step into an undignified scramble for cover.

But very soon afterwards the East Lancashires found themselves exposed to a heavy and continuous bombardment from every description of gun; and the officer, the platoon-sergeant and a number of men were struck down. Drummer Bent thereupon took command of the platoon, and, with great courage, coolness and presence of mind, succeeded in holding the position and in repelling more than one attack by the enemy, until he was relieved later in the day.

Bent's gallant conduct on this occasion was preceded and followed by several other acts of conspicuous bravery. On October 22nd, he carried ammunition to a patrol who had been cut off by the enemy. Two days later, he brought up food and ammunition to a first-line trench, under a very heavy shell and rifle fire; while on November 3rd he brought in several wounded

men who were lying exposed in the open. One of these men, Private McNulty, he rescued in a singular manner, though it would appear to have been one which this resourceful young hero had employed with success on other occasions.

McNulty had fallen some thirty yards from the British trench, and, in attempting to lift the wounded man on to his back, Bent slipped and fell. While lying on the ground, several bullets whistling just over him warned him that to rise again would be to court almost certain death. And so, instead of getting up, he adroitly hooked his feet under McNulty's armpits, and, working his way backward with his hands, dragged him to our trench, where he left the wounded man in charge of a comrade and went off to fetch a surgeon to attend to him.

Drummer, now Sergeant, Bent's consistently heroic conduct was rightly judged to be worthy of the very highest recognition, and the Victoria Cross was duly awarded to him. He is twenty-three years of age, and his home is at Ipswich.

How Lieutenant John Henry Stephen Dimmer, of the 2nd Battalion, King's Royal Rifle Corps, won the V.C. at Klein Zillebeke.

On the morning of November 10th, 1914, the 2nd King's Royal Rifles, who had been attached to the sorely-shattered 4th (Guards') Brigade, relieved the London Scottish in the section of the trenches at Klein Zillebeke which the Territorials had held so gallantly in the face of heavy and persistent shelling. The machine-gun section, which was in charge of Lieutenant Dimmer, took over from the Scots about noon, and that officer lost no time in placing his two Vickers' machine-guns in position.

The German trenches opposite to ours had been dug behind a bank on the edge of a wood, known to our men as the Brown Road Wood, and the trees of which, though it was already the second week in November, were still well covered with leaves. A great number of the trees had, however, been broken down by the fire of our artillery; indeed, as viewed from the British trenches, the wood appeared almost impassable. The No Man's Land between the

Painted specially for this work] [*By Allan Stewart.*

A shell wrecks a machine-gun which Lieutenant J. H. S. Dimmer was firing during an attack by the Prussian Guard.

[*Facing v.* 76.

[*By M. Dovaston.*

Painted specially for this work]

Bandsman T. E. Rendle tending wounded men under heavy artillery fire at Wulverghem.

[*See p.* 80.

hostile lines presented a curious and gruesome spectacle, being covered with shell-holes and littered with the unburied bodies of fallen Germans—in heaps and singly—many of which had probably lain there since the desperate and sanguinary fighting of the last days of October.

During the afternoon of the 10th, the new arrivals were very badly shelled, and also much annoyed by the attention of the German snipers, a corporal of the K.R.R.'s named Cordingley being shot dead by one of these gentry, while Lieutenant Dimmer had two narrow escapes, the bullet on each occasion passing through his cap. On the 11th, they were shelled all day, the bombardment being particularly severe in the afternoon. On the 12th, on which day the enemy began a series of attacks on the Klein Zillebeke positions and along the whole of our line towards Messines, all was quiet until noon, when the German artillery started a violent bombardment on the " Green Jackets' " trenches. This continued for about half an hour, when it slackened, and the enemy's machine-guns began to pour a torrent of bullets through the gaps in the British parapet made by their artillery-fire. Then at 1 p.m. the Prussian Guard, in

mass formation, advanced from the wood, the men marching shoulder to shoulder in perfect order, as though they were on parade.

At once the British machine-guns began to spit death amongst them, Lieutenant Dimmer firing one of the guns himself, and the storm of bullets tore through their serried ranks, mowing them down as corn falls before the sickle. But still they came on, and presently the lieutenant's gun jammed, owing to the belt getting wet. In a moment he had climbed on to the emplacement, a large adjustable spanner in his hand, and got the deadly weapon again in working order; but, as he did so, a rifle-bullet struck him in the right jaw. Heedless of the pain, he began pouring a fresh stream of lead into the advancing masses, but he had not fired many rounds when the gun stuck when traversing. Reaching up to remedy the stoppage, he was hit again by a rifle-bullet, this time in the right shoulder. But he got his gun going again for all that, and before that blast of death the Huns fell in swathes. Then a shrapnel-shell burst above him, and he was hit for the third time, three bullets lodging in his injured shoulder. But, with the blood streaming from his wounds, the heroic officer went on fighting his gun, until, when within

fifty yards of our trenches, the Germans suddenly broke and ran for cover.

Their artillery covered their retreat with a rain of shrapnel, and Lieutenant Dimmer's gun was hit and destroyed, and his face spattered with splinters of broken metal. Exhausted with pain and loss of blood, he lost consciousness for a time, but, on coming to, insisted on proceeding to Brigade Headquarters to report in person to the Earl of Cavan, commanding the 4th (Guards') Brigade. Scarcely, however, had he made his report than his strength gave out, and he collapsed and was taken to the dressing-station.

Happily, this most gallant officer, whose magnificent courage and tenacity were recognized by the award of the Victoria Cross, has since made a complete recovery, and, after being attached for a time to the 6th Battalion of the K.R.R.C. at Sheerness, he has been sent to Serbia, where doubtless fresh opportunities for distinction await him.

Lieutenant, now Captain, John Henry Stephen Dimmer, who is thirty-two years of age, having been born in London on October 9th, 1884, was formerly in the ranks, from which he was promoted Second Lieutenant in the King's Royal

Rifle Corps in February, 1908, becoming lieutenant in July, 1911. Previous to joining the Army, he was for four years in the office of a firm of civil engineers in Westminster.

How Bandsman Thomas Edward Rendle, of the 1st Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, won the Victoria Cross at Wulverghem.

By the middle of November, 1914, the First Battle of Ypres was over, and the tide of the German attack had receded and lay, grumbling and surging, beyond the defences which it had so lately threatened to overwhelm. But if the infantry on either side were now comparatively inactive, the artillery bombardment still continued with varying intensity, and day and night hundreds of shells were bursting along the length of each line, and scores of men were being killed and wounded.

It was a fine, frosty morning at the beginning of a cold "snap" which had succeeded several days of snow and rain, and the 1st Cornwalls, in their trenches near Wulverghem, were beginning to congratulate themselves that they were at length able to keep dry. "It is an ill wind,"

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Bandsman T .E. Rendle scraping up the débris of a parapet to rescue wounded men who had been buried.

[*Facing p.* 80.

Painted specially for this work] [*By H. G. Swanwick.*

Lieutenant N. D. Holbrook, R.N., dips the B11 into deep water and makes his way to the mouth of the Dardanelles, pursued by torpedo-craft.

[*See p.* 90.

however, and the one good point about the recent bad weather was that it had made the ground so soft that the enemy's high-explosive shells sank deeply in it before they detonated, and expended most of their energy in an upward direction, throwing up pyramids of mud, but doing comparatively little damage. Now, however, on falling on the frozen earth, they carried destruction far and wide, as the Cornwalls learned, to their cost, when presently a battery of heavy howitzers began to shell them fiercely.

Bandsman Thomas Edward Rendle was engaged in attending to one of the wounded, whose number was increasing every minute, when a huge shell struck the parapet not far from him, blowing the top completely in and burying several wounded men beneath the débris. Without waiting to look for a spade or to summon assistance, for he knew that there was not a moment to be lost, the bandsman ran to the rescue and began digging away furiously with his hands, and burrowing through the fallen earth, to reach his unfortunate comrades.

Soon his fingers were raw and bleeding from such unaccustomed work, while he laboured at the imminent risk of his life, since the fall of the parapet had, of course, exposed him to the

fire of the enemy's snipers, and every time he rose to throw away the soil bullets hummed past his head. But he toiled on heroically, until every man was got out, and even then, though utterly exhausted by his exertions, he remained on duty, administering what relief he could to the sufferers.

Bandsman Rendle was awarded the Victoria Cross, "for conspicuous bravery," and well, indeed, did he deserve to have his name inscribed upon that most glorious roll of honour!

How Commander Henry Peel Ritchie won the V.C. at Dar-es-Salaam

It is significant of the broad range of British naval power that although eleven Victoria Crosses had been won by officers and men of the fleet in the first two years of the war, the only one earned within two thousand miles of the British Isles was that of the unfortunate Flight Sub-Lieutenant Warneford for destroying a Zeppelin single-handed at Brussels. The very first naval V.C. of the war—the first, that is, in point of winning, though not in the date of award—was won in the tropical East African port of Dar-es-Salaam, where operations against the most

prosperous of Germany's colonial possessions, exceeding in area the whole of the German Empire in Europe, were begun at an early stage of the conflict.

The hero of this notable exploit, so typical of the breed of men who man our fighting ships, was Commander Henry Peel Ritchie, a gunnery officer of some distinction and second in command of the battleship *Goliath*—which vessel, it may be recalled, was torpedoed and sunk by a Turkish destroyer in the Dardanelles in May, 1915.

During the closing months of 1914 the *Goliath* was employed on the East Coast of Africa as a support for the cruisers employed in rounding up the German commerce-raider *Königsberg*, and a detachment of her crew under Lieutenant-Commander Paterson was actually present when that vessel was at last located and barricaded in the lower reaches of the Rufigi River. When this work had been accomplished, Commander Ritchie was detached from the *Goliath* and put in independent command of the armed auxiliary vessel *Duplex*, with instructions to proceed to Dar-es-Salaam and destroy any enemy vessels that might be found there.

It was known not only that craft operating from this port had been used to keep the *Königs-*

berg supplied with fuel and provisions while she was at sea, but also that they might be employed for running supplies down the coast to her now that she was interned. Although she was successfully "bottled up" in November, 1914, it was not until the following July that there arrived from England the special shallow-draught monitors required for dealing with her in her concealed position.

Having arrived in the neighbourhood of the German port, Commander Ritchie at once set about the execution of his task. It was impossible for such a large vessel as the *Duplex* to go into the harbour and examine the many creeks that led into it, and the Commander therefore fitted out a small steamboat with a maxim gun, protected her sides as best he could with the material at his disposal, and, on November 28th, made his way into the hostile haven and proceeded about his business, accompanied by two other tiny craft in support.

It was a day worthy in every respect of the name of the place—which means "Abode of Peace"—for not only was the weather perfect, but, save for those three invading steamboats, there was not a sign of life to be seen. This was a reception for which Commander Ritchie and

his men were altogether unprepared. They had expected to have to fight every inch of the way, and it is still a secret in possession of the enemy why they were allowed to steam uninterruptedly round the harbour sinking or irreparably damaging every floating thing they came across.

Nevertheless, that is what happened. Not a shot was fired while the work of destruction and demolition was in progress, although the pinnaces had to make their way into narrow creeks in which they might easily have been ambushed and enfiladed from either side. Commander Ritchie, however, was not for taking any chances. The absence of opposition struck him as altogether uncanny, and he scented a trap. Therefore, when he had thoroughly scoured the main creek running into the harbour and sunk nearly everything in it, he appropriated two steel lighters which he found there, and had them firmly lashed to the steamboat, one on either side.

The real effect of this was to convert the boat into a miniature armoured craft. Besides that, the barges lay deeper in the water than the steamboat itself, and this, too, was a most useful circumstance. The character of the inner recesses of the harbour and of the creeks was by no means well known, and by lashing the boat

between lighters of greater draught than itself it was assured that if the exploring party got into shallow water they would be the first to strike the bottom, leaving it possible for the steamboat to get safely away by cutting the lashings.

Slowly and deliberately the strange and ungainly triptych made its way down the creek again and into the open harbour ; and it was not until then that the troubles of the cutting-out expedition began. Why the defenders held themselves back so long we do not know, but at all events they began to make up for lost time as soon as Commander Ritchie's queer-looking craft passed out of the creek into the open.

A heavy fire was opened from every point of the compass. From huts and houses, from wooded groves, from the hills surrounding the town, and even from the cemetery, came a hail of bullets and shells, from rifles, machine-guns, and field pieces. Had it not been for Commander Ritchie's foresight in appropriating those two lighters for the protection of his little craft it is quite certain that none of the party would have got back to the *Duplex*, and even as it was the defence proved hopelessly inadequate. The enemy's positions were cunningly concealed,

and even if they could have been located the little maxim would have been useless against them.

Under the heavy fire many men were wounded more or less severely. Commander Ritchie himself was one of the first to be hit, though not badly enough to have to give over the direction of operations; and when, shortly after, first Petty Officer Clark and then Able Seaman Upton were so severely injured that they had to leave their places at the steering-wheel, the Commander himself took charge of it until his eighth wound knocked him out altogether.

As the steamboat crossed the open waters of the harbour the enemy's fire redoubled in intensity. The single gun had long ago been disabled; Commander Ritchie was wounded in half a dozen places; Sub-Lieutenant Lloyd had been placed *hors de combat* by a bullet that missed his heart only by a quarter of an inch; and most of the petty officers and men were injured more or less severely by rifle and maxim fire and flying splinters. Nevertheless, the strange little craft stood gallantly on, and it was not until she was nearing the mouth of the harbour that the Commander was compelled to give in, rendered unconscious through loss of

blood. As he fell from his post at the wheel, Petty Officer Clark, whose wound had been roughly bandaged, stepped into it, and successfully piloted the steamboat out of the reach of the enemy's fire and into the safety of the open sea.

For his "most conspicuous bravery" Commander Ritchie was worthily awarded the Victoria Cross. "Though severely wounded several times," ran the statement in the *London Gazette*, "his fortitude and resolution enabled him to continue to do his duty, inspiring all by his example, until at his eighth wound he became unconscious. The interval between his first and last severe wound was between twenty and twenty-five minutes."

He was, in fact, wounded in the forehead, in the left hand (near the thumb, which is shortened in consequence), in the left arm (twice), the right arm, and the right hip, while the hits that finally bowled him over were two bullets through the right leg, which had been broken in two places five years before by an accident on service. He was six weeks in Zanzibar Hospital, and then, rapidly recovering his fitness, returned to service in May, 1915.

Petty Officer Thomas James Clark received

the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for gallantly returning to the wheel after being wounded, and Able Seaman George Edward Upton, who was the first to relieve him after he was injured, was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. The last-named, unfortunately, was lost when the *Goliath* was sunk.

Many other brave deeds were done in the course of these operations, in which the small armed vessel *Helmuth* and a steam cutter from the cruiser *Fox* were also engaged. On one occasion the *Fox's* cutter came under fire from both sides, and a stoker was mortally wounded. In such a small craft the loss of a stoker means the loss of the only man appointed to keep the fires going, and if she had come to standstill in her then precarious position there is little doubt that everyone on board would have been killed.

In spite of the very heavy fire, therefore, Lieutenant Eric Reid Corson crept forward from the stern sheets, and, seizing the dying stoker's shovel, proceeded to tend the fires, and so brought the boat safely out of action. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, as also were Lieutenant Herbert Walter Julian Orde (severely wounded on this occasion, and sub-

sequently lost with the *Goliath*), and Sub-Lieutenant Clement James Charlewood, of the Royal Naval Reserve, who extricated the *Helmuth* from a dangerous position. A second Conspicuous Gallantry Medal went to Leading Seaman Thomas Arthur Gallagher, coxswain of the *Fox's* steam cutter, who, in the words of the official report, "when twice wounded, and under galling fire, remained at the tiller, and with the utmost coolness steered the boat through the danger zone."

How Lieutenant Norman Douglas Holbrook, in B11, sank the Turkish Battleship "Messoudieh."

A navy that is content to remain in its own harbours and allow its enemies to command the sea, has many advantages—of a kind. It does not fear shipwreck, or collision, or mine-fields. Nothing much can be done to it, and it does little itself, beyond abandoning the purpose for which it was built. The predominant navy, on the other hand, must face all these dangers, and, on top of them, the very considerable one of maintaining a constant patrol of the seas and so exposing its units to attack from hostile submarines.

In the first few weeks of the war we lost many good ships, and hundreds of valuable lives, because our patrolling cruisers had not accustomed themselves to the new conditions that the submarine involved; and many people, because our own submarines were not correspondingly successful against the enemy, rushed to the conclusion that our under-water craft were either inefficient themselves or else incapably manned. They forgot that Germany dared not send a patrol force of any sort to sea, and that if our submarines desired a victim they would have to penetrate the fortified and barricaded lairs in which the ships of the enemy lay in confident security.

Lieutenant Norman Douglas Holbrook, commanding submarine B11, was the first of our "underwater specialists" to demonstrate and overcome the difficulties with which our submarines had to contend in routing out the enemy. The B11 was stationed at Malta at the outbreak of war, and went down to the eastern Mediterranean when hostilities were begun against Turkey. She belonged to one of the oldest groups of our submarines, having been launched in 1905 as a more or less experimental craft; but much fame awaited her.

At three o'clock in the morning of December 13th, 1914, she left her parent ship to attempt the passage of the Dardanelles, and to do what damage she could before returning. So perilous was the undertaking that before she left everyone on board wrote a farewell letter to his friends, to be posted if the vessel never returned; for it was known not only that the Straits were well defended by mine-fields and other obstructions, but that the difficulties of navigation were almost as threatening as these artificial dangers. A current runs through the passage, from the Sea of Marmora to the Mediterranean, at a rate of five knots, and as the B11 could do no more than eight when submerged, her advance was bound to be deadly slow, and her withdrawal made full of jeopardy by the onward sweeping current.

But off she went, first on the surface, and then sinking lower and lower as she crept along between the hostile shores, with never more than half a mile of water on either side of her. Down to sixty feet she went, and so, blindfold, almost felt her way along the treacherous passage. In this fashion, risking rocks and shoals, she crept along under five rows of submerged mines laid by the Turks for the defence of the Straits,

any one of which could have blown the B11 to pieces and her crew to eternity.

It was not until nearly noon, when she had reached the middle of the Narrows—the most difficult and strongly fortified stretch of the Dardanelles—that Lieutenant Holbrook brought his little vessel cautiously upwards until her periscope projected above the surface and reflected a view of the surrounding seas into the interior of the submarine. It was a moment of tense anxiety, for no one on board was certain of his whereabouts. They might be under the guns of a fort, or in the midst of a flotilla of hostile torpedo-craft.

But fortune favoured them. Torpedo-craft there were—in the distance. Much more important at the moment was an old tub of a battleship, the *Messoudieh*, which had been anchored on the inner side of the mine-field in order to prevent any attempt to interfere with it.

As soon as the battleship was sighted the B11 dived again, while the men at the torpedo-tubes in the bows made ready for discharge; and then the submarine slowly rose until Lieutenant Holbrook was able once more to sight the battleship through the periscope, and to get his little craft in line for firing. Then came the word, "Fire!"

Out leapt the torpedo from its tube, making a bee-line for the *Messoudieh;* and at the same instant the periscope was detected by the enemy, and ships and forts opened a furious cannonade.

But the submarine was too quick for them. She dived—and found herself grating along the bottom at a depth of only thirty feet. Luckily, the bottom shelved rapidly, and she was soon in deep water again, and heading for the straits' mouth, forced onward by the current and pursued by torpedo-craft, whose attentions were so insistent that she had to remain submerged for nine hours in order to escape them. Escape she did, however; and one of the first things her crew read when they reached their head-quarters was the official Turkish statement that on December 13th the battleship *Messoudieh* "sank at her anchorage as the result of a leak!"

Lieutenant Holbrook and his little band of heroes had demonstrated in the most convincing manner that if the enemy were too timid to give them opportunities, the officers and men of our submarine service could make them for themselves. The commanding officer was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallant exploit; his second in command, Lieut. Sydney Winn, received the D.S.O.; and each member

of the crew, who had shared the common danger, was given the Distinguished Service Medal.

Later on, many submarines of a newer and more powerful type succeeded in getting right through the Dardanelles and in doing great damage to the enemy in the Sea of Marmora; but as the first submarine to sink a battleship the B11 deserves a special niche in history.

How Private Abraham Acton, of the 2nd Battalion, and Private James Smith, of the 3rd Battalion (attached to the 2nd), The Border Regiment, won the V.C. at Rouges Bancs.

One of the most striking features of the bestowal of military awards during the present war has been the number gained for services to the wounded. Time after time the British soldier has shown his humanity and regard for the welfare of his disabled comrades by going out to their assistance under a storm of fire. In places where the opposing trenches run close together, the work of rescuing the wounded has been rendered extraordinarily dangerous. Following our assault on the German trenches, a man might sometimes be seen moving in agony

just below the enemy's parapet. Yet to move out to his assistance would often as not entail wriggling forward across a hundred yards, or less, of open ground; and if the enemy's snipers were on the alert, his chances of returning without being hit, when at such close quarters, must be very small indeed.

It happened that early in the afternoon of December 20th, 1915, during the fighting at Givenchy, orders were sent to the 1st British Corps, then in general army reserve, to send an infantry brigade to support the Indian Corps. The 1st Brigade was ordered to Bethune, and reached that place at midnight on 20th–21st December. Later on, Sir Douglas Haig was ordered to move the whole of the 1st Division in support of the Indian Corps. At 1 p.m. on the 21st the General Officer Commanding the Division advanced in a north-easterly direction, and the 3rd Brigade from Festubert in an east-north-easterly direction. The object of these very specific movements being to pass the position originally held by the British, and to capture the German trenches three hundred yards to the east of it.

By 5 p.m. the 1st Brigade had obtained a hold in Givenchy, and the ground south as far as the

canal, while the 3rd Brigade had progressed to a point half a mile west of Festubert. By nightfall the 1st South Wales Borderers and the 2nd Welsh Regiment of the 3rd Brigade had occupied the original trenches to the north-east of Festubert, the 1st Gloucestershire Regiment continuing the line southward along the track east of Festubert.

It was at Rouges Bancs that Private Abraham Acton, of the 2nd Battalion, and Private James Smith, of the 3rd Battalion (attached to the 2nd), The Border Regiment, showed such magnificent coolness and courage in rescuing a wounded comrade. The unfortunate man was seen lying exposed against the enemy's trenches, and here he had lain for seventy-five hours, when Acton and Smith made a supreme effort on his behalf.

The task was one of the utmost danger for them, for at any moment they might be seen and promptly fired upon. But with one fixed thought for their comrade they set out towards him. They reached him, and at length had the satisfaction of bringing him back safely to their trench. Later in the day these most courageous men made their way once more into the open, and under a storm of shot and shell again brought in a wounded man. The return journey

was undertaken at imminent risk of their lives, and they were under fire for sixty minutes while conveying the wounded man into safety. As might have been expected, Acton and Smith were rewarded with the highest honours, each receiving the V.C.

How Lance-Corporal O'Leary, of the Irish Guards, won the V.C. at Cuinchy.

Before the Great War was a month old the critics and all the experts had formally decided that men had ceased to count. They were never tired of telling us that it was purely an affair of machines of scientific destruction, and that personal courage was of no avail. Gone were the days of knightly deeds, of hairbreadth adventures, of acts of individual prowess. They told us so often and with such persistence that we all began to believe them, and then one day the world rang with the story of Michael O'Leary's great exploit, and we knew that the age of heroes was not yet past. Once more science had been dominated and beaten by human nerve and human grit.

The school for heroes is not a bed of roses, and O'Leary's was no exception. He was in the

Navy; then he served his time in the Irish Guards, and after his seven years he went to Canada and joined the North-West Mounted Police. By the time he was twenty-five he had sampled most of the hardships that this soft age still offers to the adventurous and given proof of the qualities which were to make him one of the outstanding figures of the "Great Age." A long and desperate fight with a couple of cut-throats in the Far West had revealed him to himself and shown his calibre to his friends. The "Hun-tamer" was in the making.

On mobilization in August, O'Leary hastened to rejoin his old regiment, and by November he found himself in France, with the rank of Lance-Corporal. His splendid health, gained in the open-air life of the North-West, stood him in good stead during the long and trying winter, but the enemy, exhausted by their frantic attempt to "hack a way" through to Calais, gave little trouble, and O'Leary had no chance to show his mettle. With the spring, however, came a change, and there was considerable "liveliness" in that part of the line held by the Irish Guards. The regiment was holding important trenches at Cuinchy, a small village in the dull and dreary country dotted with brick

fields which lies south of the Béthune–La Bassée Canal. On the last day of January the Germans attempted a surprise against the trenches neighbouring those of the Irish Guards. The position was lost and had to be retaken so that the line should be re-established. There was much friendly rivalry between the Irish Guards and the Coldstreams, who had lost the ground, but at length it was decided that the latter should lead the attack, while the Irish followed in support.

The morning of February 1st, a day destined to be a red-letter day in the history of the British soldier, broke fine and clear, and simultaneously a storm of shot and shell descended on the German trenches, which were marked down for recapture. For its wretched occupants there was no escape, for as soon as a head appeared above the level of the sheltering parapet it was greeted by a hail of fire from the rifles of our men. O'Leary, however, was using his head as well as his rifle. He had marked down the spot where a German machine-gun was to be found, and registered an inward resolve that that gun should be his private and peculiar concern when the moment for the rush came.

After a short time the great guns ceased as suddenly as they had begun, and with a resounding cheer the Coldstreams sprang from the trenches and made for the enemy with their bayonets. The Germans, however, had not been completely annihilated by the bombardment, and the survivors gallantly manned their battered trenches and poured in a heavy fire on the advancing Coldstreams. Now was the turn of the Irish, and, quick as a flash, they leapt up with a true Irish yell. Many a man bit the dust, but there was no holding back that mighty onslaught, which swept towards the German lines.

O'Leary, meanwhile, had not forgotten his machine-gun. He knew that it would have been dismantled during the bombardment to save it from being destroyed, and it was a matter of life and death to perhaps hundreds of his comrades that he should reach it in time to prevent its being brought into action. He put on his best pace, and within a few seconds found himself in a corner of the German trench, on the way to his goal. Immediately ahead of him was a barricade. Now a barricade is a formidable obstacle, but to O'Leary, with the lives of his company to save, it was no obstacle,

and its five defenders quickly paid with their lives the penalty of standing between an Irishman and his heart's desire.

Leaving his five victims, O'Leary started off to cover the eighty yards that still separated him from the second barricade, where the German machine-gun was hidden. He was literally now racing with death. His comrades' lives were in his hand, and the thought spurred him on to superhuman efforts. At every moment he expected to hear the sharp burr of the gun in action. A patch of boggy ground prevented a direct approach to the barricade, and it was with veritable anguish that he realized the necessity of a detour by the railway line. Quick as thought he was off again.

A few seconds passed, and then the Germans, working feverishly to remount their machine-gun and bring it into action against the oncoming Irish, perceived the figure of fate, in the shape of Lance-Corporal O'Leary, a few yards away on their right, with his rifle levelled at them. The officer in charge had no time to realize that his finger was on the button before death squared his account. Two other reports followed in quick succession, and two other figures fell to the ground with barely a sound. The two

survivors had no mind to test O'Leary's shooting powers further, and threw up their hands.

With his two captives before him, the gallant Irishman returned in triumph, while his comrades swept the enemy out of the trenches and completed one of the most successful local actions we have ever undertaken. O'Leary was promoted sergeant before the day was over. The story of his gallant deed was spread all over the regiment, then over the brigade, then over the Army. Then the official "Eye-witness" joined in, and told the world, and finally came the little notice in the *Gazette,* the award of the Victoria Cross, and the homage of all who know a brave man when they see one.

How Lieutenant Cyril Gordon Martin, D.S.O., held the Enemy back for Two and a Half Hours and won the V.C.

At 7.30 on the morning of March 10th, 1915, the battle of Neuve Chapelle began with perhaps the most terrific artillery preparation in the history of modern warfare, and by the evening of that day the village was ours, and on a front of three miles we had advanced more than a mile. But our ultimate objective—the driving

of a great wedge into the enemy's line by the capture of the ridge south of Aubers—still remained to be accomplished; and it was to this task, which was to prove, unfortunately, beyond the capacity of our troops, that the two following days were devoted. Simultaneously a number of movements were undertaken all along the British front, with the object of preventing any sudden massing of reinforcements, and it was during one of these attacks—that upon the German position at Spanbroek Molen—that a young officer of the 56th Field Company, Royal Engineers, Lieutenant Cyril Gordon Martin, performed the gallant action that gained him the Victoria Cross.

Lieutenant Martin had already won the Distinguished Service Order, by his gallantry in the first weeks of the war, during the retreat from Mons, when, at the head of his platoon, he had captured a German trench and held it until reinforcements arrived. On this occasion he was twice wounded, and invalided home for some months; indeed, he had only recently returned to the front.

Early in the action at Spanbroek Molen, Lieutenant Martin was again wounded; but he made light of his hurt and volunteered to lead

Painted specially for this work. [*By John de G. Bryan.*

Lieutenant C. G. Martin, D.S.O., R.E., and a small party of bombers prevent the Germans from recapturing a section of their trench at Spanbrock Molen.

[*Facing p.* 104.

Painted specially for this work] [*By A. Pearse.*

Acting-Corporal C. R. Noble and Company-Sergeant-Major H. Daniels cut the German wire entanglements under a withering rifle-fire.

[*See p.* 106.

a little party of six bombers against a section of the enemy's trenches. So effectively did they discharge their deadly missiles that the Germans were quickly driven out in rout and confusion; when the lieutenant and his men proceeded to transfer the parapet of the trench and to strengthen their position with sandbags, in readiness for the inevitable counter-attack. This was not long in coming, but, inspired by the splendid example of their leader, the little band of heroes drove their assailants back, and though the attack was again and again renewed, in apparently overwhelming numbers, they succeeded in holding the enemy at bay for two and a half hours, when orders arrived for them to abandon the captured post and retire. By their gallant defence they had rendered most valuable service, by holding up German reinforcements, who were unable to advance until this section of their trenches had been retaken.

How Acting-Corporal Cecil Reginald Noble and Company-Sergeant-Major Harry Daniels, of the 2nd Battalion, Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own), won the V.C. at Neuve Chapelle.

There has been no more cruel spectacle in the present war than that of dauntless courage baffled and brought to naught by mechanical contrivances; of brave men, advancing to the assault of the enemy's position in the full confidence of victory, suddenly held up by the barbed-wire entanglements which they had fondly imagined would have been completely swept away by their own artillery preparation; and, while thus checked, exposed to a murderous fire from the entrenched foe. For however heavy and long-continued the bombardment preceding an attack may have been, there will always be places here and there in the defences where the high-explosive shells have failed to do their work and where the entanglements still hold firm; and cruel indeed is the fate of the battalion which finds itself obliged to cut a way through such an obstacle while rifle and machine-gun play upon it at point-blank range.

If it escapes practical annihilation, it will indeed be fortunate.

From such a fate was the 2nd Rifle Brigade saved on March 12th, 1915, on the third day of the battle of Neuve Chapelle, by the heroism and devotion of two of its non-commissioned officers. When the " Green-jackets " approached that section of the second-line German trenches south of the Pietre Mill, which they had been ordered to take, they saw, to their consternation, that the wire-entanglements protecting them were still practically intact, and that to force them would entail the most appalling loss.

It was at this most critical moment that Acting-Corporal Noble and Company-Sergeant-Major Daniels resolved to sacrifice themselves for their comrades. While the others threw themselves on the ground to take what cover they might from the withering fire, beneath which they were falling fast, the two heroes ran towards the entanglements and began to cut away at them like men possessed. Well they knew that they were courting almost certain death ; that already a hundred rifles and half a score of machine-guns were trained upon them. But they recked not of that ; one thought alone possessed their minds : to make a way for their

comrades before they themselves were shot down. And they succeeded; for, though both speedily fell, dangerously wounded, it was not before a lane had been cut through the wire, and the path to victory stood open. With ringing cheers, the Riflemen rushed through the breach like a living tide; the bayonet soon did its deadly work, and the trenches were won.

Both of these gallant men were awarded the Victoria Cross, "for most conspicuous bravery"; but, sad to relate, Corporal Noble never lived to receive the coveted distinction which he had so richly merited, as he died of his wounds shortly after the action. Sergeant-Major Daniels happily recovered, though it was not until towards the middle of May that he was finally discharged from hospital.

Daniels, who, it may be mentioned, is one of a very large family, being the thirteenth of sixteen children, is a Norfolk man, having been born at Wymondham in that county in December, 1884. Left an orphan at an early age, he was placed in the St. Faith's Lane Boys' Home, Norwich, and received his education at Thorpe Hamlet School. He joined the 2nd Rifle Brigade in 1903, and served for nearly ten years in India, where he was considered one of the finest gymnasts in the

country. His eldest brother, William Daniels, enlisted in the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards, in 1889, and was killed at Magersfontein; another brother, Robert, served for twelve years in the Royal Garrison Artillery.

On his recovery, Sergeant-Major Daniels was the recipient of several flattering ovations, which culminated in most enthusiastic scenes at Norwich, where he was presented by the Lord Mayor with a beautifully-framed and illuminated copy of an address of congratulation, passed by the Council. He is, we may add, only the third Norfolk man to win the Victoria Cross, his predecessors on that most glorious roll of honour being the late Major Mordaunt Edwards, for conspicuous bravery at Tel-el-Kebir, and the late Rev. J. W. Adams, for his gallant conduct in saving the lives of three men of the 9th Lancers near Sherpur, in the Afghan War of 1879.

How Corporal William Anderson, of the 2nd Battalion, Alexandra, Princess of Wales' Own (Yorkshire Regiment), won the V.C. at Neuve Chapelle.

In the winter of 1914–15 the British troops in Flanders and Northern France were subjected

to as severe a trial as any imposed since the terrible days of the Crimea. The desperate fighting of October and November, 1914, was hardly concluded when the army was called upon to face the rigours and hardships of a winter campaign. Frost and snow alternated with periods of continuous rain, and the men stood for many hours together almost up to their waists in bitterly cold water, and only separated by one or two hundred yards from a most watchful enemy. Every measure which science and medical knowledge could suggest were employed to mitigate these hardships, but the sufferings of the men were very great. They bore their misfortunes, however, with magnificent courage and endurance.

About the end of February, 1915, when the difficulties of an offensive were greatly lessened by the drying-up of the country and by brighter weather, Sir John French began his preparations for a vigorous offensive movement. The object of the main attack was to be the capture of the village of Neuve Chapelle, and the enemy's position at that point, and the establishment of the British line as far forward as possible to the east of the village.

Just north of the village there is a triangle

of roads, and here there were several large houses, with walls enclosing gardens, and also orchards. To flank the approaches to the village, the enemy had established a strong guard with numerous machine-guns. The first day of the offensive, March 10th, resulted in the capture of the Neuve Chapelle position, but on resuming the attack on the following day, it was found impossible to renew the advance without further artillery preparation. Bad weather interrupted aerial reconnaissance, and telephone wires were cut, and thus doubly hindered, the fire of the artillery could not be controlled with accuracy.

On the third day of the offensive the same unfavourable conditions prevailed to hamper artillery action. The 4th and the Indian Corps, however, most gallantly attempted to capture the strongly fortified positions in their front. They reached these and drove the Germans from them, and succeeded in holding them for some hours, when they were at length compelled to retire. All through the day the Germans, aided by a storm of shell, dashed themselves in violent counter-attacks against the British, only to be repulsed.

While the main attack was being carried out, operations were undertaken by troops of the 2nd

Army, with a view to keeping the enemy in front of them occupied, and reinforcements were thus prevented from being sent to the main point of attack when they were urgently required.

At 12.30 on the morning of March 12th, the 17th Infantry Brigade of the 4th Division, 3rd Corps, began their attack. An assault was carried out in two converging columns against the village of L'Epinette. The first houses were captured without much loss. But on pushing forward, the rest of the village was found to be very strongly protected with wire entanglements, and while the British were cutting the wire, the Germans succeeded in beating a hasty retreat along their communication trenches. In this attack an advance was made of three hundred yards along a front of half a mile, and though the enemy attacked repeatedly in an endeavour to regain their lost ground, they were flung back with considerable losses.

At one point in the British lines a large party of the enemy gained a footing in the trenches. Their occupation was, however, not more than temporary, for Corporal William Anderson, of the 2nd Battalion, Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own (Yorkshire Regiment), promptly offered to go and drive them out. Calling three

others to his assistance, he advanced along the trench in a most determined manner.

The three men with him were all wounded, but, having flung his own bombs among the enemy, he attacked them with those of his disabled comrades. When the whole supply of bombs had been exhausted he opened a rapid fire with his rifle. He was quite alone, but the speed and decision with which he acted seemed to completely paralyse the defence of the Germans. Small wonder, then, that his action should have been regarded as altogether exceptional, and worthy of the highest award, for he had saved the lines by his conspicuous bravery and decision at a most critical moment.

How Lance-Corporal Wilfred Dolby Fuller, of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, won the V.C. at Neuve Chapelle.

The great battle, in which the British took the offensive on the morning of March 10th, 1915, had as the main object of its attack the village of Neuve Chapelle. Beyond the village there flows the little river Des Layes, and further to the east may be seen a low ridge. It was hoped that the advance might be pushed right to the

ridge and that the plateau on top would be captured, for if this was accomplished the British would command the roads to Lille and Roubaix, and the cities along the line of the Scheldt.

The experience of the war up to this time had proved the futility of carrying out an attack on a large scale without adequate artillery preparation, and an immense quantity of ammunition was, therefore, stored up behind the British lines, in preparation for the movement.

The bombardment began, punctually to time, at 7.30 on the morning of March 10th. The din was almost maddening in its vehemence and intensity, as hundreds of guns let loose their torrent of missiles. The great howitzer shells rose into the air to an enormous height, before descending and driving their way down into the trenches, where they burst with terrific force. Dependence was largely placed on the heavy howitzers for the work of destruction, but every gun which was at all likely to prove useful was pressed into service for the occasion.

When the order to attack was given the men found that the wire entanglements had been completely swept away and the trenches wrecked, and as a consequence the Neuve Chapelle posi-

tion passed into British hands at the first advance on March 10th. But away on the extreme north of the attack the men were held up by wire entanglements which had not been demolished by the artillery. All the way along, on the parapet of the trench behind these entanglements, the Germans had placed their machine-guns, and the British were surprised by a terrible fire as they rushed up and tried to work their way through the wire. On the 12th there was desperate fighting, and in this the British infantry gallantly acquitted themselves.

Lance-Corporal Wilfred Dolby Fuller, of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, was one of a party of bombers who gallantly engaged the enemy and assisted in capturing position after position from them. While in the enemy's trenches, he noticed a party of Germans making their way down a communication trench. Realizing that they were endeavouring to escape, he ran towards them, and flinging a bomb at the leading man, killed him. The others hesitated for a moment, looking round to see how they might escape. But finding there was no means of evading the lance-corporal's bombs, they surrendered to him in a body. Though he was

quite alone at the time, a party of nearly fifty men gave themselves up.

Much ground was won, in the fighting round Pietre Mill, largely owing to the bravery and initiative of individuals. But as the fighting progressed the men came upon the enfilading fire of machine-guns, which compelled them to fall back to their original lines.

When the time comes for the Grenadier Guards to take down their colours and emblazon them with the glorious record of this war, the memory of men will surely go back to that afternoon early in the March of 1915, when Lance-Corporal Wilfred Dolby Fuller and Private Edward Barber fearlessly maintained the high traditions of their regiment, and, as their just reward, received the V.C.

How Private Jacob Rivers, of the 1st Sherwood Foresters (Notts and Derbyshire Regiment), won the V.C. at Neuve Chapelle.

It is pathetic to reflect how many honours in the present war have been conferred posthumously, the brave fellows whose heroic deeds had so richly earned them having either been

killed in the very action in which they were performed, or almost immediately afterwards. Such was the fate of Private Jacob Rivers, of the 1st Sherwood Foresters.

Private Rivers, who was thirty-four years of age and unmarried, was a native of Derby. He had already done twelve years' service in the Army, having been seven years in India with the Royal Scots Fusiliers, and afterwards five years in the Army Reserve. At the time when war broke out, however, he was free, and was in the employ of the Midland Railway Company at Derby, working as a labourer on a ballast train. But the old fighting spirit was there, and when his country needed his services, he was not the man to stay at home. He was, indeed, one of the first to volunteer, and was accepted by the 1st Battalion Sherwood Foresters. Being an experienced soldier, he was ready for service at once, and went to France with one of the earliest drafts. The letters he wrote home appear to have been few and confined to news of a purely personal character. Certainly, he made no attempt to describe his experiences, and the greatest of all he never lived to tell.

This occurred on March 12th, 1915, at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. Observing a large

number of Germans massed on the flank of an advanced company of his battalion, Private Rivers, on his own initiative, crept up to within a few yards of the enemy and hurled bomb after bomb among them, throwing them into utter confusion and forcing them to retire. This most gallant action he repeated later on the same day, again causing the enemy to retire, but, unhappily, not before a bullet had cut short the career of one of the bravest of Britain's sons.

"The only personal effects belonging to the late Private Rivers which have been sent home to his mother," says a writer in the *Derby Daily Telegraph*, "are the metal box containing Princess Mary's Christmas gift to the soldiers and a postcard which he had recently received. The box has a tragic interest, for it has been pierced by a bullet. It is the habit of soldiers to carry this box in their breast-pocket, less as a shield against a possible bullet than as a convenient means of carrying their tobacco, and the fact that there is a hole right through it clearly indicates that Private Rivers was shot through the heart."

How Private Edward Barber, of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, won the V.C. at Neuve Chapelle.

The action for which Private Edward Barber, of the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, gained the V.C. at Neuve Chapelle proved to be one of the most dramatic of the whole war. Most fitting it is, too, that a Grenadier Guardsman should have been awarded that most coveted of all military honours, the V.C., under the circumstances in which it was won by Barber, since it finds this famous old regiment once again actively engaged in the particular fighting for which it was formed in the days of Charles II.

It may not be out of place to make mention here of the fact that the English diarist, John Evelyn, relates that he saw at Hounslow on the 29th of June, 1678, "a new sort of soldiers, called Grenadiers, who were dexterous in flinging hand-grenades." Each battalion eventually came to have a grenadier company, and the men who formed these companies were physically of greater power and the biggest men in the regiment.

In the evolutionary process of military weapons, however, the grenade dropped out of

use, and the organization of grenadiers was abandoned in 1858. But they maintained their existence as the leading companies of their battalions, and in virtue of the fame they had won, wore a distinctive headdress besides taking the right of the line on parade.

It was on March 12th, 1915, the third day of the great Battle of Neuve Chapelle, when the 20th Brigade of the 7th Division, the 4th Corps, were engaged in desperate fighting around Pietre Mill, that Barber so gallantly upheld the fighting fame of the Grenadiers.

The neighbourhood of the Pietre Mill was marked by immensely strong positions, and as yet artillery fire had not touched them. Nothing daunted Barber, however, who rushed on in front of his grenade company, and flung his bombs with all his might amongst the Germans. With such vigour and determination did he act, that the panic-stricken enemy surrendered to him in great numbers. It was moments only till Barber's comrades came on the scene, and on running up they found him quite alone and unsupported, but with the enemy surrendering to him from every side. Typical of the highest acts of courage and initiative, it was thus that Barber won his V.C.

How Lieutenant Benjamin Handley Geary, of the 4th Battalion, East Surrey Regiment (attached 1st Battalion), won the V.C. at Hill 60.

In the early summer of 1914, a traveller on the Ypres–Lille Railway might have noticed, about three miles south-east of the former town, a slope some two hundred and fifty yards long by two hundred deep. This slope is Hill 60, which, before many months had passed, was to become so famous that no future visitor to the battlefields of Flanders will ever consider his tour complete until he has visited it.

At the beginning of the third week in April, 1915, Hill 60, which had more than once changed hands since the beginning of the previous autumn, was in German occupation, and its possession was of great importance to the enemy, since it afforded them excellent artillery observation towards the west and north-west. If, on the other hand, the British could contrive to capture it, it would give them a gun-position from which the whole German front in the neighbourhood of Hollebeke Château would be commanded. Our men fully appreciated this

fact, and had been carefully mining the ground, and the evening of Saturday, April 17th, was the time selected for the mines to be fired and the Hill captured.

At 7 p.m. on the day in question a more tranquil spot than Hill 60 could not have been found along the whole length of the Western front—a few seconds later it was like a volcano in eruption, seven mines being exploded simultaneously, and a trench-line and about one hundred and fifty Huns blown into the air. The explosions were the signal for every British gun in the vicinity to come into action and rapid fire to be opened all along our trenches. "It was," writes one who was present, "like one continuous roar of thunder, while the rifle-fire sounded like hail on the slates, only much louder."

Under cover of the bombardment, the 2nd King's Own Scottish Borderers and the 1st West Kents, from the 13th Brigade, dashed up the Hill, won the top, entrenched themselves in three huge craters made by the explosions, and brought up machine-guns. During the night they were heavily shelled, and had to sustain several determined counter-attacks, which were repulsed, after fierce hand-to-hand fighting; but in the

early morning of the 18th the Germans advanced in great force, and, though mown down in heaps by our machine-guns, succeeded, by sheer weight of numbers, in forcing back the troops holding the right of the Hill to the reverse slope, where, however, they hung on throughout the day.

On the evening of the 18th, the Borderers and the West Kents were relieved by the other two battalions of the 13th Brigade, the 2nd West Ridings and the 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry, who again stormed the Hill, under cover of heavy artillery-fire, and drove the enemy off at the point of the bayonet.

The following morning another fierce attack was launched against the British, with the aid of artillery and asphyxiating bombs. It was repulsed, but during the greater part of the 19th and 20th our men were subjected to a tremendous bombardment from three sides. During the night of the 18th–19th two companies of the 1st East Surreys, from the 14th Brigade, were brought up from their billets at Ypres, and took over a part of the support trenches. About 5 p.m. on the 19th, the enemy started shelling them, seemed unable to find the range, and were, after a time, silenced by the British guns.

The East Surreys spent the night in improving

the communication trenches and endeavouring to extend their own trench, in the course of which one of their officers, Captain Huth, was killed. Next morning, the Germans started shelling them heavily again, and continued the bombardment for several hours. This time they managed to get the range, and the adjutant of the battalion was blown to pieces by a shell, while the parapet of the trench was breached in several places. Upon the gaps thus made in their defences, the enemy directed an incessant rifle and machine-gun fire, which rendered the task of filling them up a most hazardous operation.

Towards five o'clock in the afternoon, the Germans resumed their bombardment, and the officer in command of the East Surreys, Major Patterson, was mortally wounded. The enemy's shell-fire cut the telephone-wires between the trench and our batteries in the rear, with the result that the British guns were unable to make any effective reply. Presently a messenger arrived with a request for reinforcements, and Second Lieutenant Benjamin Handley Geary assembled his platoon and led them up the Hill.

The communication trenches had been so badly knocked about that it was impossible to

make use of them, but Lieutenant Geary and his men succeeded in reaching the left crater, which was being held by a handful of the 1st Bedfords, who greeted their arrival with loud cheers. The lieutenant placed his men around the inside of the rim of the crater, and there they hung on for the next few hours.

All the ground about them was being fiercely shelled, but the enemy seemed unable to put their shells inside the crater itself. However, their trenches were only a little distance away, and they kept up an almost continuous shower of hand-grenades, from which our men suffered severely, and gradually the crater became so full of dead and wounded that the ground was almost invisible.

The Germans also had a machine-gun trained on the only way by which reinforcements could come up, and, though repeated attempts were made by the East Surreys and the Bedfords to send support to their hard-pressed comrades, comparatively few men succeeded in getting through, while practically every one of the officers who led them was shot down, so that at one time Second Lieutenant Geary was the only unwounded officer on the Hill.

Meanwhile darkness was coming on, and our

men were in complete ignorance of how matters were going with their comrades on their right and left. All the ground in their rear was now so swept by shell-fire that it was impossible for reinforcements to reach them, and it looked as though they must be completely cut off. No orders had reached Lieutenant Geary, and he was obliged to act on his own responsibility.

Presently the Germans began to advance up their old communication trenches, one of which led to the left crater. They were obliged, however, to advance in single file, and Lieutenant Geary, aided by a private named White, who loaded his rifles for him, shot down man after man, until at last the Huns had had enough and prudently abandoned the attempt. But they succeeded in making their way up another communication trench leading to the right of the middle crater, and began firing into the backs of our men on the left.

Thinking it advisable to make an attempt to ascertain what was happening on either side of him, Lieutenant Geary dispatched a corporal and a couple of men to try to get into touch with the officer in command of a trench on the left of the Hill. But none of them returned, having probably been killed on the way.

He, himself, at great personal risk, hurried across to the trench on the right, and, reaching it in safety, found that our men were still holding on to the greater part of the trench, though the Germans had succeeded in occupying the extreme left of it. There were two officers remaining in the trench, one of his own battalion and one of the Bedfords. They, like himself, had received no orders, but, after discussing the situation, the three officers decided that it was their duty to hang on as long as possible, and not to think of abandoning the Hill so long as there remained any chance of reinforcements reaching them.

On his way back to the left crater, Lieutenant Geary met a Major Lee, an officer of another battalion, bringing up a detachment, with orders to drive the enemy out of the part of the trench which they had captured; and this officer told the lieutenant to get together what men he could, and, on seeing two or three flare-lights go up, to lead them across the middle crater and attack the Germans on the right, while he himself attacked on the left.

Lieutenant Geary rejoined his men and directed some of them to dig a trench in rear of and commanding the middle crater. While they

were engaged on this work, which was carried out under a heavy fire, a German flare-light went up and afforded the young officer an excellent view of the portion of the trench which the Germans had captured.

Observing that on the side nearest to him the parapet of the trench had been so destroyed by shell-fire as to afford the occupants very little protection, he directed a man to load for him, and began potting away at the Huns with considerable effect. Then, ordering the man who had been loading for him to continue firing in his place, he went away and posted another man in a position which would enable him to fire into the communication trench down which the enemy would have to retire.

As he was returning, he found some of the Queen Victoria Rifles—a Territorial battalion which greatly distinguished itself and suffered cruel losses on that terrible night—carrying up ammunition, but uncertain as to the whereabouts of their comrades. He directed them, and then went to the left crater, where he found his men holding on most gallantly, but in sore need of ammunition.

Meanwhile, he had been expecting to see the flares go up—the signal for him to lead his men

across the middle crater to attack the Germans in conjunction with Major Lee—but, as none appeared, he went to find that officer, and learned that the enemy had already evacuated the portion of the trench they had captured and had retired to their communication trench. From this, however, they were keeping up a storm of grenades, which would make it very difficult for us to hold the trench which they had abandoned.

Going back again to the left crater, he found his men so reduced in numbers and so short of ammunition that he saw that, unless they were speedily reinforced, they would be obliged to withdraw from the crater and dig themselves in behind it. He was on his way to inform Major Lee of the necessity of doing this without delay, as the day was now beginning to break, when he was severely wounded by a bullet in the head, an injury which put him out of action and subsequently deprived him of the sight of an eye. His men, however, succeeded in holding the crater which they had so gallantly defended until relief arrived.

Second Lieutenant Geary was awarded the Victoria Cross "for most conspicuous bravery and determination at Hill 60," the *Gazette* adding

that the attacks upon the crater were repulsed "mainly owing to the splendid personal gallantry and example of Second Lieutenant Geary," who "exposed himself with entire disregard to danger."

Some five months previously to gaining the Victoria Cross at Hill 60, this most gallant young officer had given an earnest of the wonderful courage and *sang-froid* which characterized his actions upon that occasion. He volunteered for a scouting expedition to reconnoitre the German trenches, which were about one hundred and thirty yards from our own lines. Flattened to earth, he crawled forward by slow stages and succeeded in reaching the enemy's parapet, and looking over it, perceived a mackintosh, supported by a detached bayonet.

Without a moment's hesitation, Lieutenant Geary seized this bayonet and succeeded in bringing back the trophy to his own battalion. After possessing himself of the bayonet, he had intended to enter the trench itself, but as he was still leaning over the parapet to satisfy himself with regard to its formation, a figure suddenly appeared round the corner of the trench not a dozen yards away, upon which Lieutenant

Geary ducked down and wriggled back to the British lines with all possible expedition.

Like Lieutenant Geoffrey Woolley, of the Queen Victoria Rifles, who also won the V.C. at Hill 60, Second Lieutenant, now Lieutenant, Geary, entered the Army straight from Oxford. He went into residence at Keble College in 1910, and had just taken his B.A. degree when the war broke out. He is twenty-four years of age.

How Lieutenant George Rowland Patrick Roupell, of the 1st Battalion, East Surreys, won the V.C., and Company Sergeant-Major Alexander John Reid, of the same Regiment, won the D.C.M., at Hill 60.

There has been no more obstinate and sanguinary fighting on the blood-soaked soil of Flanders than that which took place towards the end of April, 1915, for the possession of the coveted position known as Hill 60, two miles east of Ypres; and in that desperate conflict there is no more stirring episode than the heroic defence of one of the forward trenches by a company of the 1st Battalion, East Surreys, during the night of April 20th–21st.

That the East Surreys were enabled to hold the post, against overwhelming numbers and in the face of the greatest difficulties, was mainly due to the splendid gallantry and devotion of two men—Lieutenant George Rowland Patrick Roupell and Company Sergeant-Major Alexander John Reid, the first of whom was stationed on the left of the position, and the second on the right.

Except for the discharge of a few shells from the batteries on either side, the forenoon of April 20th had been very quiet; but, about four o'clock in the afternoon, the German artillery began a terrific bombardment of our position, which was only too evidently the prelude to a determined counter-attack to regain possession of the Hill. For several hours shells of every description rained upon the British trenches; but, though some regiments suffered severely, the East Surreys had but few casualties.

Their comparative immunity did not continue long, however, for at dusk the counter-attack commenced, the method employed by the enemy being to send forward strong parties of bomb-throwers through a series of communication trenches which ran from their trenches to ours. The trench occupied by the East Surreys was

assailed in the most desperate manner, and though the bombers were received with a heavy rifle-fire, they continued to advance with the utmost courage and determination, and hurled their deadly missiles with great effect. Some of the bombs fell on the parapet, portions of which they completely demolished, and others fell into the trench itself, causing great havoc.

On the right flank, where Sergeant-Major Reid was stationed, the position of affairs soon became most critical, for not only were the men falling fast, but ammunition was running short. Unless reinforcements and a fresh supply of cartridges could be brought up, it would be impossible to stem the advancing tide of Germans much longer.

But how was help to be summoned? The communication trench leading to our reserve trenches had been so badly damaged that it afforded little or no shelter, while in places it was quite impassable; and the German shells seemed to be searching every yard of the open. A man must needs bear a charmed life to cross it in safety.

Darkness fell—the intense darkness of a night unrelieved by moon or stars, and the obscurity was rendered the more profound by the smoke

from the bursting shells. This made matters even worse for our men, for they had no Véry light-pistol with them. There they stood, firing only when they felt certain that a cartridge would not be wasted, and waiting for the rush which they knew must overwhelm them, no matter how gallantly they might struggle.

It was then that Company Sergeant-Major Reid resolved to take the fearful risk of crossing the zone of fire to our reserve trenches. Leaving the trench, he started at a run across the open, which was so torn up by the terrific shelling to which it was being subjected that it was fast becoming a mass of huge holes, and negotiating these craters successfully, a fall into one of which might have entailed a sprained ankle or even a more serious injury, reached our supports, hastily explained the critical situation of affairs, and hurried back with what men and ammunition he could obtain, and a promise that further reinforcements should be sent for.

He regained the trench in safety, and not a moment too soon, for the East Surreys were falling fast, and but few cartridges remained in their bandoliers. He posted the men he had brought with him in the places where they were most needed, and distributed the ammunition,

but very soon perceived that, unless further aid could be obtained, it would be impossible to hold the trench. He therefore again made the hazardous journey to our supports, and returned with a party of the Bedfords.

By this time the trench was reduced almost to ruins and littered with the dead and wounded. But the arrival of the Bedfords, who brought with them a Véry light-pistol, and Véry lights, as well as a further supply of ammunition, put fresh heart into the survivors of the gallant little band.

With the aid of the Véry lights, they were now able to estimate the strength of the enemy, who, they saw, outnumbered them by two or three to one; and, towards dawn, after consultation with the officer in command of the Bedfords, the brave sergeant-major for the third time ran the gauntlet of the enemy's fire, and guided a party of the Queen Victoria Rifles, under the command of a major, to the assistance of his hard-pressed comrades. The arrival of these last reinforcements probably saved the situation, for, as day was breaking, the Germans made a most determined attempt to carry the trench, only, however, to be repulsed with considerable loss.

While the right of the East Surreys was being so hard pressed, their comrades on the left were in equally desperate case. But here again the heroism of one man saved the situation.

During the terrific bombardment of our position which preceded the German counter-attack, Lieutenant Roupell was wounded in several places; nevertheless, he refused to quit his post, and led his men in repelling a determined assault by the enemy. During a lull in the bombardment, he retired to have his wounds dressed, when the surgeon who attended him did everything possible to dissuade him from returning to the firing-line.

He insisted on going back, however, and when, towards evening, he saw that it was impossible for his men to hold their ground unless assistance could be procured, he, though faint from loss of blood, made his way, like Sergeant-Major Reid, across the shell-swept open to the reserve trenches and brought up reinforcements; with the aid of these he held the position throughout the night.

At two o'clock in the morning of the 21st, the East Surreys were relieved by the Devons, when it was found that only a mere handful of them had come scathless through that terrible ordeal.

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. S. Baydatopulos.*

Second Lieutenant G. H. Woolley encouraging and directing his men, who were being heavily shelled and bombed in their trench on Hill 60.

[*Facing p.* 137.

Painted specially for this work] [*By A. Stewart.*

Lieutenant G. R. P. Roupell's wounds being hurriedly dressed in his trench during the German counter-attack at Hill 60.

[*Facing p.* 136.

Two of their officers had been killed and three wounded, while one hundred and twenty-five N.C.O.'s and men were either killed, wounded, or missing. In short, that gallant company, as a fighting unit, had ceased to exist.

Lieutenant Roupell was awarded the V.C. for "most conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty;" while Company Sergeant-Major Reid received the D.C.M. for "conspicuous gallantry and valuable service."

Company Sergeant-Major Reid, who is twenty-nine years of age, is a Londoner.

How Second Lieutenant Geoffrey Harold Woolley, of the 9th County of London Battalion, The London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles) (T. F.), won the V.C. at Hill 60.

Early in the eventful August of 1914, a young undergraduate of Queen's College, Oxford, the son of a country clergyman, and who, but for the outbreak of war, would have been by this time a clergyman himself, joined the 5th Battalion, Essex Regiment, and went with them to Drayton, near Norwich, where that unit was undergoing its training, under the command of

Colonel J. M. Welch. His stay with the 5th Essex was very brief, however, for on August 26th he was transferred to the Queen Victoria's Rifles. This young man was Second Lieutenant Geoffrey Harold Woolley, who was to have the honour of being the first Territorial officer to win the Victoria Cross.

The Queen Victoria's Rifles, who have greatly distinguished themselves in the present war, originated in two old volunteer corps, the St. George's Volunteers and the Victoria Rifles, which in 1892 were amalgamated and made the 1st Volunteer Battalion of the King's Royal Rifle Corps, under the title of the Victoria and St. George, or 1st Middlesex V.R.C. In 1908, on the formation of the Territorial Force, the Bloomsbury Rifles were joined to them, and they became the Queen Victoria Rifles, 9th County of London Battalion, The London Regiment.

The Queen Victoria Rifles crossed the Channel in November, 1914, and in due course proceeded to take their turn in the trenches with the regular battalions of the 5th Division, to which they were attached, where they came in on occasion for some pretty severe shelling. But they were not employed in attack until the affair at Hill 60,

in the following April, which was an experience none of them is ever likely to forget.

Hill 60—a hill, by the way, only by courtesy—since it is, in point of fact, merely an earth-heap from the cutting of the Ypres–Lille Railway, lies a little to the west of Klein Zillebeke and just east of the hamlet of Zwartleben, the scene of the famous charge of our Household Cavalry on the night of November 6th, 1914. The importance was that it afforded an artillery position from which the whole German front in the neighbourhood of Château Hollebeke could be commanded.

About ten o'clock on the night of April 16th, the Queen Victoria's marched off in the wake of two companies of the 1st West Kents and two companies of the 2nd King's Own Scottish Borderers, who were to make the first attack on the German trenches—or what remained of them, after the mines which it was intended to explode had done their work—and took up a position in a trench to the right of the Hill.

About seven in the evening of the 17th, just as the sun was setting, the British exploded seven mines on the Hill, which played havoc with the defences, blowing up a trench line and one hundred and fifty men. Simultaneously with

the last explosion, our artillery started shelling the enemy, and rapid fire was opened all along our trenches, the object being to draw the attention of the Germans in front and prevent them reinforcing at the Hill. The German artillery replied, and a shell burst close to the emplacement of one of the Queen Victoria's machine-guns, burying three of the men, with the gun on top of them. They were soon dug out, however, and the gun was found to be undamaged.

Meanwhile, the West Kents and the K.O.S.B.'s had won the top of the Hill, entrenched themselves in the shell-craters, and brought up machine-guns. During the night several of the enemy's counter-attacks were repulsed with heavy loss, and fierce hand-to-hand fighting took place; but in the early morning the Germans succeeded in forcing back the troops holding the right of the Hill to the reverse slope, where, however, they hung on throughout the day.

In the evening, the West Kents and the K.O.S.B.'s were relieved by the 2nd West Ridings and the 2nd Yorkshire Light Infantry, who again stormed the Hill, under cover of heavy artillery fire, and drove the enemy off with the bayonet.

"They got the Germans altogether," wrote one of the machine-gun section of the Queen Victoria's, "and gad, didn't the beggars run! Our new gun-position faced the Hill, and we were able to blaze at them like the deuce. We got rid of any amount of belts. I believe nearly every shot was effective. We simply mowed them down like grass."

But Hill 60 was of vital importance to the enemy, if they intended to maintain their Hollebeke ground, and on the 19th another fierce attack was made on it, with the support of artillery and asphyxiating bombs. It was repulsed, but the Hill formed a salient, which exposed our men to fire from three sides, and all through the 19th and 20th a terrific cannonade was directed against them. On the evening of the latter day came another determined infantry attack, while all the night parties of the enemy's bomb-throwers kept working their way up to our trenches.

At 9.30 that night, two companies of the Queen Victoria's, under Major Rees and Captain Westby, received orders to advance from their trenches and take up a position close to the top of the Hill. Although the distance to be traversed was only some two hundred yards, so

terrible was the fire to which they were exposed, that it took them two hours to reach the post assigned to them, where they dug themselves in close to a huge crater made by one of the British mines which had been exploded on the 17th.

Towards midnight, Sergeant E. H. Pulleyn was ordered to take sixteen men to the very crest of the Hill some twenty yards away, to fill a gap in our trench-line there. A withering fire was immediately opened upon the party by the enemy, who were not thirty yards distant, and only the sergeant and eleven of his men reached the position, while of the survivors five fell almost immediately. Pulleyn and the remaining six maintained their ground for a few minutes, when, recognizing the impossibility of holding it longer, they retired and rejoined their comrades, carrying their wounded with them.

Both Major Rees and Captain Westby had already been killed, and of one hundred and fifty riflemen who had followed them up that fatal Hill, two-thirds had fallen. The remainder held on stubbornly, however, and so accurate was their fire, that the Germans did not dare to advance over the crest. But the cross-fire to which our men were exposed was terrible; never

for a moment did it slacken, and man after man went down before it. When day began to break, there were but thirty left.

It was at this critical moment that an officer was seen making his way up the Hill towards them. The men in the trench held their breath ; it seemed to them impossible that anyone could come alive through the midst of the fearful fire which was sweeping the slope ; every instant they expected to see him fall to rise no more. But on he came, sometimes running, sometimes crawling, while bullets buzzed past his head and shells burst all about him, until at last he climbed the parapet and stood amongst them, unharmed. Then they saw that he was Second Lieutenant Woolley, who, learning that their officers had been killed, had left the security of his own trench and run the gauntlet of the enemy's fire to take charge of that gallant little band.

His arrival put fresh heart into the Queen Victoria's, and there, in that trench, choked with their dead and wounded comrades, shelled and bombed and enfiladed by machine-guns, this Oxford undergraduate, the two brave N.C.O.'s Pulleyn and Peabody, and their handful of Territorials, held the German hordes at bay hour after hour, repelling more than one attack,

in which the young lieutenant rendered excellent service by the accuracy of his bomb-throwing, until at last relief came.

Of four officers and one hundred and fifty N.C.O.'s and men who had ascended the Hill the previous night, only two N.C.O.'s and twenty-four men answered the roll-call. But, though they had suffered grievously, the battalion had gained great honour, both for themselves and the whole Territorial Force.

Second Lieutenant, now Captain, Woolley had the proud distinction of being the first Territorial officer to be awarded the Victoria Cross; while Sergeant Pulleyn and Corporal Peabody each received the Distinguished Conduct Medal, for "the great gallantry and endurance displayed, and for the excellent service rendered, in the fight for the possession of Hill 60."

Other decorations which have fallen to the share of the Queen Victoria's Rifles up to the end of 1915 are: Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. Shipley—C.M.G.; Captain S. J. Sampson—Military Cross; Sergeant E. G. Burgess—D.C.M.

How Private Edward Dwyer, of the 1st Battalion, East Surrey Regiment, won the Victoria Cross at Hill 60.

About three miles to the south-east of Ypres, and just east of the hamlet of Zwartelen, where our dismounted Household Cavalry made their decisive charge on the night of November 6th, 1914, lies an earth-heap from the cutting of the Ypres–Lille railway, some two hundred and fifty yards long by two hundred yards deep, which is known to fame by the name of Hill 60. Desperate indeed was the fighting of which Hill 60 was the scene towards the end of April, 1915. Its importance to the British consisted in the fact that it afforded an artillery position from which the whole German front in the neighbourhood of the Hollebeke Château could be commanded, and we were determined to get possession of it.

Accordingly, about seven o'clock in the evening of April 17th, we exploded seven mines on the hill, which played havoc with the defences, blowing up a trench line and a hundred and fifty of the enemy with it, and enabled our men to win the top of the hill, where they entrenched themselves

in the shell craters, and brought up machine-guns. Next day the enemy delivered a series of most determined counter-attacks, which resulted in desperate fighting at close quarters. But they were all repulsed, and by the evening the Germans had been driven from the slopes of the hill and the *glacis* was littered with their dead.

However, the position was of far too much importance to the enemy for them to desist from their efforts to recover it, and during the next three days our troops had no respite. All through the 19th and 20th they were subjected to a terrific bombardment from three sides, and lived through a veritable inferno; while on the evening of the latter day they were called upon to withstand another fierce infantry attack. The 1st East Surreys were terribly hard pressed, and Lieutenant George Roupell won the Victoria Cross, as described elsewhere, for the splendid courage and tenacity with which, though several times wounded, he held his post with the remnants of his company until help came. But he was not the only member of his battalion to gain the crown of the British soldier's ambition.

A lad of nineteen, Private Edward Dwyer, who, earlier in the day, had displayed great gallantry

in going out into the open, under heavy shell-fire, to bandage the wounded, found himself alone in his trench, from which his comrades had been driven by a strong party of German bomb-throwers. The Germans were in a trench only some fifteen or twenty yards distant, so close that Dwyer could hear them talking; and the brave lad, aware that if they took his trench, the trenches behind would be at their mercy, resolved to hazard his own life to save his comrades.

Collecting all the grenades he could find, he climbed on to the parapet of the trench and began throwing them at the Germans. His appearance in this exposed position was, of course, the signal for a hail of bombs; but, happily, the Germans' aim was bad, while his own throwing was most accurate and effective. In fact, he succeeded, single-handed, in keeping the enemy at bay until reinforcements arrived, and the trench he had so heroically defended was saved.

Dwyer was wounded on April 27th and sent to the military hospital at Etretat, and it was not till nearly a month later that he learned that he had been awarded the Victoria Cross, "for most conspicuous bravery and devotion

to duty." He was decorated by the King himself, at Buckingham Palace, on June 28th, 1915, his Majesty shaking hands with him very cordially and complimenting him on his performance. While in England, he rendered excellent service at recruiting meetings, but on returning to the front, was unhappily killed during the summer of 1916.

Private Dwyer, who had been promoted Lance-Corporal, was the youngest soldier ever awarded the Victoria Cross. He was born at Fulham, where his parents still reside, on November 25th, 1895. He enlisted in the Army when he was only sixteen, previous to which he had been a greengrocer's assistant.

The "River Clyde": How the Navy won six V.C.'s in a Day.

Few more desperate adventures are recorded in history than the beaching of the tramp steamer *River Clyde*—the "modern Horse of Troy"—at Sedd-ul-Bahr during the first landing of the British Expeditionary Force on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The whole operations called for the closest sympathy and co-operation between the Navy and the Army, and never have

the two forces worked together in such perfect harmony. Unfortunately, the enemy had been warned of our intention so long in advance that his defences were as nearly perfect as they could be, and where a foothold was obtained the loss of life was appalling.

The *River Clyde* was selected to be cast ashore on the extremity of the peninsula, with a living freight of about two thousand troops—an exploit without parallel in history. Under the guidance of Commander Edward Unwin, R.N., the vessel was prepared at Tenedos for her daring mission. Large holes were cut in the side, level with the decks, and sloping gangways suspended by wire hawsers were run out, so that the men could rush down them as soon as the ship touched the ground; while battlements of sandbags and steel plating were erected in the bows and on the bridge to shelter the machine-guns by which the landing was to be covered.

It was early on Sunday, April 25th, 1915, a lovely spring morning, that the *River Clyde* left the covering squadron of warships and headed for the beach. The heavy guns of the battleships boomed out from behind, their great shells hurtling over the steamer and crashing into the Turkish positions ashore; but not a

gun was fired in reply. Barges had been made fast to the sides of the steamer, so that a floating bridge might be formed from them, if she grounded too far from the beach, and alongside were five "tows" of five boats each, packed with men of the Dublin Fusiliers, who were to land first, and cover the disembarkation of the troops from the *River Clyde.*

Unhappily, the scheme did not work as it was intended. As the flotilla drew nearer and nearer to the beach there was still no sign of opposition ashore, and everyone had begun to think the landing would be accomplished without opposition. Vain hope! The open boats and the *River Clyde* touched ground almost at the same moment, and no sooner had the first of them grated on the bottom than a terrific fire was opened from the whole of the surrounding hills that dominated the beach.

The Turks had bided their time, and chosen the moment well. For a considerable distance to seaward the bottom had been strewn with barbed wire, and as the men who escaped the first tornado of fire leapt into the water to rush ashore they found themselves entangled in the wire and were shot down as they stood. Only a handful of men succeeded in getting ashore,

and gaining the protection of a small ridge of sand on the beach. As for the boats, they were held fast, and their naval crews were wiped out in the pitiless hail of fire that was directed on them. There were some in which no soldier lived to reach the shore, and no sailor to get back to his ship.

On board the *River Clyde* the machine-guns were busy, but the enemy's positions were so well concealed that they could do little, nor did the heavy guns from the fleet in the rear have much effect. As the vessel grounded, the lighters that were to form the bridge were run out ahead, and the men began to pour out of the holes in her side and down the gangways; but the lighters failed to reach their proper stations. A gap was left between two of them which it was impossible for the men to cross, and scores were shot down as they stood helpless on the uncompleted bridge, or tried to scramble ashore through the unseen wire entanglements below.

All the time the steamer was the target of innumerable machine-guns and pom-poms. Fortunately, she had been so strengthened that these had little effect, but if the Turks had had a few heavier weapons available she would assuredly have been battered to pieces, and the

whole of her crowded human freight sent to destruction. As it was, three howitzer shells fired from the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles crashed into her, but luckily failed to explode.

It was while the vessel lay thus helpless that the valour of the Navy came gloriously to the front. Commander Unwin and Able Seaman William Williams made a line fast to one of the drifting lighters, and, dropping over the side, waded through the water and towed the barge towards a spit of rock that gave direct access to the shore. Midshipman George Drewry, of the Royal Naval Reserve, was already in the water, wading ashore to make a land end for the towing-rope; but he met a wounded soldier in the water, and, with the assistance of another soldier, tried to carry him to land. The unfortunate man was shot dead in the arms of his would-be rescuers.

In the meantime Commander Unwin and Seaman Williams had nearly reached the rock with the lighter in tow when they found that the rope they had was not long enough. Drewry at once went back to the ship to get another length; and while the other two were waiting Williams was shot as he stood breast-deep in the water. The Commander carried him back

to the lighter; but the brave fellow was dead. It was, indeed, nothing short of a miracle that brought any of the gallant band alive through the unceasing torrent of fire that was poured upon them.

When Drewry returned with the rope it did not take long to make the lighter fast, and then the troops began at once to pour across the shot-swept bridge. They were mown down in scores, and the barges soon became piled with the dead and wounded. Those who succeeded in reaching the shore were little better off, for the enemy's fire commanded the beach almost as effectively as it did the water.

Presently a shot severed the lashing rope, and again the lighters went adrift. Lieutenant Morse and Midshipman Drewry were on board the inshore barge, and the latter was struck in the head by a fragment of shell; but he hastily bound his wound with a soldier's scarf, and, jumping overboard, with a line between his teeth, swam towards the other lighter; but for the second time that day a vital rope proved too short, and the plucky midshipman's strength was failing. With a fresh line, Midshipman Wilfred Malleson rushed into the breach, and, throwing himself over the side, succeeded in

making the connection again; but once more it was broken, and although Malleson made two further efforts to carry a rope, he was unsuccessful.

In the meantime, Commander Unwin had been working like a Trojan, nearly all the time above his waist in water. By no means a young man—he had passed his fiftieth year—the physical strain began to tell, and he was obliged to return to the *River Clyde*, where the doctor ordered him at once to bed. Before long, however, he was up and doing again, defying the doctor's orders. He took charge of a boat and made several journeys, picking up wounded men as they lay helpless in the shallow water, and it was not until he was overcome by sheer physical exhaustion that he finally gave up. He had worked for many hours under the heaviest fire and the most trying conditions it is possible to imagine, but although he was hit three times he was not seriously hurt.

Another hero of this lamentable but glorious exploit was Seaman George Samson, of the Naval Reserve, who remained on the lighters the whole of the day, busying himself among the wounded and giving all the assistance he could to the officers as they carried the lines from

[*By Edgar A. Holloway.*

Painted specially for this work]

Commander E. Unwin, assisted by Able Seaman W. Williams, towing a barge in the face of a murderous fire.

[*Facing p.* 154.

Painted specially for this work] [*By Edgar A. Holloway.*

Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall returning with the wounded from the shore amidst a storm of shot and shell.

[*Facing p.* 155.

lighter to lighter. He was hit over and over again, but nothing could drive him from his post; and when he returned later to England he still had a dozen pieces of metal in his body.

There is yet another series of heroic deeds to be recorded in connection with this ever memorable landing, and they are the more remarkable because nearly a year elapsed before the authorities were able to discover the identity of the officer principally concerned in them.

It has already been mentioned that the soldiers who succeeded in reaching the beach were exposed to a fire almost as deadly as when they were in the water or on the bridge of barges, and large numbers were struck down by Turkish shot and shell. The *River Clyde* lay not far away from them, and their cries drifted out to the ship with appalling clearness. Yet it seemed impossible to do anything to help them; but there was one group of men, at any rate, to whom the word "impossible" did not occur.

On board the *River Clyde* was Sub-Lieutenant Arthur Waldene St. Clair Tisdall, a twenty-four year-old officer of the Royal Naval Volunteers, who had been given his commission less than six months before. Unable to resist the heart-rending appeals from the beach, he jumped into

the water, and pushed a boat before him as he endeavoured to wade ashore, in order to bring off as many of the wounded men as he could.

It was more than one man's job, however, and Tisdall was compelled to call for assistance. It was immediately forthcoming. Leading Seaman James Malia joined him at once, and the two succeeded in getting the boat to the beach and loading it with wounded men, whom they carried back to the *River Clyde*.

Twice did these two make this perilous, shot-swept journey, and then other men insisted on joining in. These were Chief Petty Officer William Perring and Leading Seamen Fred Curtis and James Parkinson, who, with Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall still in command, made three journeys to the shore and brought off as many wounded as they could reach and their boat would carry. Those on board the stranded collier watched in mute admiration; but darkness fell before the work was done, and the young officer dropped out of sight as quickly and completely as if he had disappeared, and no one seemed to know who it was that had done this great work.

Unfortunately, the gallant Tisdall fell in action a fortnight later, intrepidly facing the enemy on

a spit of rock which made him the target of a hundred rifles. For close upon a year his extraordinary bravery passed without any sign of official recognition, and then, on April 1st, 1916, it was announced that the King had been pleased to confer on him the posthumous award of the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty."

Chief Petty Officer Perring, subsequently given a commission in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, as also were Leading Seamen Malia and Parkinson, and there is no doubt that a similar honour would have been conferred on Leading Seaman Curtis had he not, unfortunately, been placed among the missing on June 4th, 1915.

Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall had had a most brilliant career at Cambridge, where he took double first-class Classical honours, and won the Chancellor's Gold Medal in 1913. He rowed in the First Trinity boat, and a volume of his poems has been published. There has seldom been a more remarkable instance of the combination of scholarship with courage on the battlefield.

The rest of the immortal story of the *River Clyde* belongs to the Army, but the two services had nobly shared the terrible glories of that

awful day. In his despatch dealing with the Gallipoli landing, General Sir Ian Hamilton wrote :

" Throughout the events I have chronicled the Royal Navy has been father and mother to the Army. Not one of us but realizes how much he owes to Vice-Admiral de Robeck (the naval Commander-in-Chief) ; to the warships, French and British ; to the destroyers, mine-sweepers, picket-boats, and to all their dauntless crews, who took no thought of themselves, but risked everything to give their soldier comrades a fair run at the enemy."

The services of the heroes of the *River Clyde* were rewarded by the King with a just generosity. Commander Unwin, Midshipman Drewry, Midshipman Malleson, Able Seaman Williams (killed in the action) and Seaman Samson, as well as Sub-Lieutenant Tisdall, all received the Victoria Cross, while Lieutenant Morse was appointed to the Distinguished Service Order. Many other officers and men received the D.S.O. and the D.S.M. respectively. No previous event had been signalized by the granting of so many Victoria Crosses ; but no other in the history of the Cross had so well merited them.

How Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Hotham Montagu Doughty-Wylie, C.B., C.M.G., of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, and Captain Garth Neville Walford, of the Royal Field Artillery, won the V.C. at Sedd-el-Bahr.

About one o'clock on the morning of Sunday, April 25th, 1915, the transports containing our Mediterranean Expeditionary Force dropped anchor at a point five miles from the shores of the Gallipoli Peninsula, and by the time the first streaks of dawn—the dawn of the last day which many a brave man was ever to see—appeared in the eastern sky, boats and destroyers crowded with troops were stealing in towards the land.

Fierce was the resistance of the Turks at each of the six landing-places—from Gaba Tepe, on the north side of the peninsula, to Beach S. in Morto Bay—but at Beach V. which, at its southern extremity, is commanded by the castle and village of Sedd-el-Bahr, and where our men were exposed to every type of converging fire, it was the fiercest of all. Here fell Brigadier-General Napier, Captain Costeker, his brigade

major, Lieutenant-Colonel Carrington Smith, commanding the Hampshire Regiment, and many other distinguished officers. Here a whole company of the Munsters was practically wiped out, and a half-company of the Dublin Fusiliers reduced, by midday, to twenty-five effectives; and when the morning of the 26th dawned, the disembarkation was still in its first stage, and the remnant of the landing party—the survivors of the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers, and of two companies of the Hampshires—had been crouching for many hours behind a steep, sandy bank at the top of the beach, the cover afforded by which had alone preserved them from being annihilated.

But, cramped and stiff though they were, tormented by thirst, and subjected to a heavy and unceasing fire, our men were still full of fight, for with them were brave and devoted officers—Lieutenant-Colonels Doughty-Wylie and Williams, of the Headquarters Staff, and Captain Walford, Brigade-Major, R.A., who, with sublime indifference to their own danger, had been striving all through that day and night of ceaseless peril to keep their comrades in good heart.

And now, when it was daylight once more, these officers proceeded to organize an attack

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. S. Bagdatopulos.*

Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. M. Doughty-Wylie, C.B., C.M.G., leading his men at the storming of Sedd-el-Bahr.

[*Facing p.* 160.

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Boyle in the E14 sinks a large Turkish transport.

[*See p.* 165.

against the hill above the beach. Fortunately, it happened that at about this same time, arrangements had been made for the warships to begin a heavy bombardment of the Old Fort, the village of Sedd-el-Bahr, the Old Castle, north of the village, and of the ground leading up from the beach, under cover of which our men, most gallantly led by Lieutenant-Colonel Doughty-Wylie and Captain Walford, succeeded by 10 a.m. in gaining a footing in the village.

They had to encounter a most stubborn resistance, and suffered heavy losses from the fire of cleverly-concealed riflemen and machine-guns. But though many fell, their comrades, supported by the terrific fire from the huge naval guns, continued to press on, breaking in the doors of the houses with the butts of their rifles, and routing the snipers out of their hiding-places at the point of the bayonet, and soon after mid-day they penetrated to the northern edge of the village, whence they were in a position to attack the Old Castle and Hill 141.

Brave Captain Walford had already fallen, and now, when, owing so largely to his inspiring example and splendid courage, the position had been almost won, Lieutenant-Colonel Doughty-Wylie, who, with a little cane in his hand, had

led the attack all the way up from the beach through the west side of the village, under a galling fire, was shot through the brain while leading the last assault. But our men, undeterred by the fall of their leaders, pushed resolutely forward, and, fighting their way across the open in the most dashing manner, before 2 p.m. had gained the summit and occupied the Old Castle and Hill 141.

Both Lieutenant-Colonel Doughty-Wylie and Captain Walford were awarded the Victoria Cross, the official announcement stating that "it was mainly due to the initiative, skill and great gallantry of these two officers that the attack was a complete success."

How Second Lieutenant William Barnard Rhodes-Moorhouse, of the Special Reserve, Royal Flying Corps, won the V.C.

It was but a short space of time after the outbreak of the Great War that the opposing armies in Flanders and France settled down to siege warfare in two parallel lines of trenches. Stretching from the Channel coast at the one extremity to the frontier of Switzerland at the other, these vast lines afforded no opportunity

at any point for cavalry to work round and reconnoitre the enemy's positions.

In these circumstances, therefore, aeroplanes were destined to prove of the greatest service, being more rapid and comprehensive in their work than ever cavalry had been. In making a flying reconnaissance over the enemy's lines, they have succeeded in obtaining information concerning the movements of troops, and have also proved of the greatest use in directing the fire of the artillery upon the enemy's positions and batteries. Their use, too, has wrought a complete change in the strategy of war, for the element of surprise in operations on a great scale is no longer possible, except in thickly-wooded country, or in weather too bad for flying.

But great as have been its services in the work of reconnaissance, the fame and high standing of the corps do not rest on this alone. With the utmost skill and daring airmen have sallied forth to effect the destruction of whatever was of strictly military importance to the enemy. Zeppelin hangars, submarine bases, munition factories, barracks, and railway stations along the enemy's lines of communication, have all in turn been raided, and bombs have been dropped upon them, with disastrous effects.

Within recent date the men of the Royal Flying Corps have brought their operations to an extraordinary climax. Not content with bombing and destroying inanimate objects, they have actually assumed the offensive against bodies of troops in the field, and the strange sight has been witnessed of panic-stricken Germans in their trenches holding up their hands in token of surrender to British airmen flying above them.

Such exploits are marked by daring and dauntless courage, but they are attended with very great risk to the airmen; for on crossing the enemy's front, their aeroplanes are the objects of heavy fire from rifles, machine-guns and anti-aircraft guns, besides which they have to engage in fights with the enemy's aeroplanes.

One of the most heroic incidents in the brief history of the Royal Flying Corps belongs to the spring campaign of 1915. The railways at Menin, Courtrai, Don, Douai, and Lille had been successively bombed, and, thus forewarned, the enemy were in a position to make special preparations for meeting future attacks.

On April 26th, in another raid, Second Lieutenant William Barnard Rhodes-Moorhouse, of the Special Reserve, Royal Flying Corps,

flew to Courtrai, and as he approached the station, calmly descended to within a short distance of the railway lines to drop his bombs. As he did so the enemy opened a heavy fire on him, and he was mortally wounded just as he was starting back. With great courage and determination, however, he set out on his return journey to the British lines, which he reached after flying for thirty-five minutes at a very low altitude. He thus saved his aeroplane, and was able to report that he had successfully accomplished his task. Unhappily for the service to which he belonged, he died of his wounds, but his most conspicuous bravery was fittingly rewarded with the V.C.

Lieut.-Commander Boyle's wonderful Voyage into the Sea of Marmora.

When, in December, 1914, Lieutenant Norman Holbrook, V.C., crept up the Dardanelles in B11 and sank the Turkish battleship *Messoudieh* at her moorings, he set an example which every officer and man in the submarine service was keen to follow. There was great competition among commanding officers for the honour and the opportunities afforded in this theatre of

war, but the authorities had perforce to select some of our largest and best boats for this work. Lieut. Holbrook was fortunate, inasmuch as he was already stationed in the Mediterranean with his little 316-ton submarine when the war broke out; but the vessels subsequently sent from England were mainly of the "E" class, displacing about 800 tons, and having engines three times as powerful as the "B" class for surface work, and five times in the submerged condition.

One of the earliest of the "E" boats to win distinction was the E14, a vessel completed by Messrs. Vickers soon after the outbreak of war, and dispatched at once to the Eastern Mediterranean under the orders of Lieutenant-Commander Edward Courtney Boyle. This officer had already been mentioned in dispatches for his observation work off the German coast in the opening days of the war, his command then being submarine D3; but he was to do far greater things with E14.

On April 27th, 1915, he left the main body of the fleet and made for the Dardanelles. In the four months that had elapsed since the B11 had achieved such a brilliant *coup* the Turks had greatly improved the anti-submarine defences of the narrow channel. The submerged mine-

fields had been increased in numbers and efficiency; in certain parts of the Straits old hulks had been sunk in order to impede the progress of our submarines, while guns had been mounted in favourable positions ashore for covering any vessel that happened by this means to be compelled to rise to the surface.

The enemy had also organized a system of patrols, a number of small vessels being apportioned to each two or three miles of the channel, to guard it against the passage of submarines. Appropriately enough, it was one of these very ships that the E14 secured as her first victim. The Dardanelles are so narrow, and the current that sweeps through them from the Sea of Marmora to the Mediterranean so strong, that a submarine is bound to rise at more or less frequent intervals, in order to verify her course and avoid running into the banks on either side. Lieut.-Commander Boyle had set out with the intention of first getting into the Sea of Marmora, and then settling down to work when he got there; but, coming up on one occasion to take his bearings, he saw, by means of the periscope, the reflected image of a Turkish gunboat not many hundred yards distant.

Now, a periscope was the very thing that

the gunboat had been set to look out for, and the Turks who failed to see it had no one but themselves to blame for what followed. Lieut.-Commander Boyle, intently studying the surrounding area of water reflected on to the screen below, gently edged his vessel round until she was aiming straight at the hapless Turkish gunboat. A couple of brisk orders, and 300lb. of guncotton was tearing towards the enemy at the rate of 35 miles an hour, eight or nine feet beneath the surface of the water.

In a few seconds the submarine rocked to a terrific explosion as the torpedo reached its target. Those of the British vessel's crew who could be spared from their stations hurried along for a periscope-glance at the sinking gunboat; and then, remaining only long enough to assure himself of the enemy's fate, Lieut.-Commander Boyle dived his vessel and waited at a safe depth until the hubbub on the surface had subsided. Then he proceeded on his journey, leaving the Turkish navy the poorer by a vessel —either the *Berk-i-Satvet* or a sister ship—of 740 tons, built in Germany in 1907, and carrying a crew of 120 men.

This was an excellent beginning, but more important successes were yet to be achieved.

Entering the Sea of Marmora, Lieut.-Commander Boyle was compelled to use the utmost caution, for the news of his coming had preceded him, and the anti-submarine patrol, maintained by destroyers, torpedo-boats, gunboats and armed auxiliaries, was being pursued with the utmost determination, sometimes compelling the E14 to remain totally submerged for twelve hours at a stretch. On April 29th, however, she "bagged" her second victim—this time a Turkish transport; though whether she had troops on board at the time, or was returning more or less empty, after carrying them across to the Asiatic side, is not known.

Four days later she repeated her success of April 27th, stalking and sinking one of the vessels specially deputed to get rid of her. The Turkish fleet comprised such a miscellaneous collection of ships of all ages and sizes that this was one of the many that our officers were unable to identify, and in the case of a submarine, it is, of course, quite impossible for the attacking vessel to stand by and pick up survivors, and learn the vessel's name in that way.

After this, the hunt became so hot that the E14 had to make herself scarce, though she was still able to cruise about in the less frequented

parts of the sea, and pick up a good deal of useful information. For a week no favourable opportunity of using her torpedoes presented itself, but on May 10th came the greatest success of all. What the Admiralty described as "a very large transport, full of troops," was sighted not very long after she left Constantinople. The sinking of transports laden with more or less helpless soldiers is not one of the nicest refinements of twentieth century warfare, but it stands in principle on the same basis as the mining of an enemy trench, and its legitimacy is, of course, fully recognized even by those who most deplore it. Consequently, when Lieut.-Commander Boyle found this transport, without convoy, carrying soldiers into the fighting line against British, French and Russian troops, he had no doubts whatever as to his duty. He took up his position at right angles to the course of the transport and waited; and when the right moment came the torpedo was released.

As there were no other hostile ships in sight, the E14 came to the surface. The transport was already settling down when our men emerged from the hatch of the conning tower on to the deck, and doubtless a large number of men had been killed by the torpedo's explosion.

Others, however, had succeeded in launching boats and rafts, and these, of course, were not interfered with, though German submarines in similar circumstances had not hesitated to fire on innocent civilians. The submarine remained for some time on the surface; and when the approach of hostile torpedo-craft warned her that it was time to submerge, the transport had already disappeared. How many men went down with her only the Turks know.

The E14 remained in the Sea of Marmora another eight days after this, and on May 13th, while cruising on the surface, forced a small enemy steamer—probably carrying munitions of war—to run herself ashore in order to avoid being torpedoed. On May 18th the submarine slipped back again into the Dardanelles, and within a few hours was past all dangers and back into the open Mediterranean. As a mere record of work done, her performance was a great one, but we shall fail to realize it to the full unless we remember that for three weeks she had been operating single-handed in an area only 175 miles long and 50 miles across at its widest part, its waters constantly scoured by hostile warships in search of submarines, and every inch of its shores in the possession of the enemy.

Within a few days after the E14's return, it was announced that the King had been pleased to award the Victoria Cross to her commanding officer; that the Distinguished Service Cross was awarded to Lieut. E. G. Stanley and to Acting-Lieut. R. W. Lawrence, of the Royal Naval Reserve, and that each member of the crew had been granted the Distinguished Service Medal. The official statement issued by the Admiralty recorded the report of Vice-Admiral de Robeck, commander-in-chief in the Eastern Mediterranean, that it was "impossible to do full justice to this great achievement, and that his Majesty the King's appreciation and reward for these services have throughout the Allied Fleets given universal satisfaction."

How Private Lynn, 2nd Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers, won the D.C.M. and V.C.

Private Lynn, of the Lancashire Fusiliers, might almost be said to have been born a hero. From the moment the great war broke out and the British Expeditionary Force landed in France he attracted the attention of his officers and comrades by his cheerfulness in adversity and his utter contempt of danger. Indeed, he might

almost be said to have set up his own standard of courage, for the magnificent exploit which brought him a hero's death and the Victoria Cross was but the crowning act of a life of heroism and merely an eclipse of his own previous records. He was not destined to be fêted and acclaimed, to hear his name become a household word, to see himself the idol of admiring thousands. Indeed, death robbed him of the knowledge that his supreme act of self-sacrifice had not passed unnoticed. But wherever the English language is spoken the name of Lynn will be held in honoured remembrance, for his life and death added a new page to the long chapter of our national glory.

The campaign had not been a month old when Lynn made his mark. The regiment was strenuously engaged in the region of the River Aisne, and the Germans were on the point of delivering one of their massed attacks when his machine-gun jammed—a habit to which even the best of machine-guns is addicted. The situation was critical, for a machine-gun is worth a thousand men at such a moment. Quick as thought, Lynn dismounted his gun, carried it to the rear under a heavy fire, repaired it with the calm precision of a boy playing in his

nursery, and returned in time to annihilate the attacking column. For so valuable a service he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. No one was more surprised than he when the good news was announced, for, to himself, he pictured his deed as a simple act of duty, neither requiring nor deserving any special recognition. Of such stuff are heroes made.

The long winter passed and with it the period of cheerless days and sleepless nights in the welter of Flemish mud. The spring dried the ground. The weather became warmer, and even the professional grumbler who flourishes in every British regiment found himself becoming moderately contented. And then, as the end of April was approaching, the enemy showed that he had lost none of his cunning. What he had lost was his sense of chivalry, even of soldierly decency, and in a moment he told the world that there was no level to which he would not stoop if military advantage might be snatched thereby. He started out to poison his foes with the most virulent gases his chemists and scientists could find. All the world knows the story of the second battle of Ypres, how for three weeks our men, surprised and unprepared, held their ground round the ruined city while

the poisonous fumes rolled over them, enveloped them, choked and killed them.

On one of the most critical days of that most critical period, the Lancashire Fusiliers were peacefully making their tea in the trenches. Some six hundred yards away was the enemy's line. There was a lull in the awful storm of shelling, which had raged incessantly for a week. Suddenly the sentries called attention to a greenish-yellow smoke which was rising from the German trenches. The regiment had not had practical experience of the gas before, as they had only just arrived at that part of the front. Respirators of a sort had been issued to them the day before, but their efficiency was uncertain, and, indeed, they were replaced by a new pattern immediately afterwards.

In ignorance of what was happening, the men watched the advancing cloud with no little curiosity. The Germans were seen retiring from their front trench, and immediately Lynn got his machine-gun on to them with great effect. In a few moments, however, the poisonous vapour was rolling over the parapet, filling every hollow in the ground, and sinking to the bottom of the trench. There was no escape. The men, choked and blinded, fell writhing on the ground,

and almost immediately came the order to retire to reserve trenches. Within a few seconds the trench was left to the dead, the dying, and a mere handful of British soldiers, among them Private Lynn.

In the agony and confusion of that crisis Lynn realized that behind that cloud of gas the enemy were advancing, and that the trench was as good as lost. He made up his mind that the trench should not be lost. There was no time to fix his respirator, though his eyes and lungs were full of the poisonous fumes, and his efforts to breathe brought the blood to his mouth. One by one his comrades succumbed and dropped, and soon he was alone.

The advancing Germans were near now, confident that their new weapon had delivered their enemies into their hands. They expected a trench empty except for corpses. They were mistaken. The very might and majesty of Britain stood waiting for them in the person of a simple private soldier. With a bound Lynn was on the parapet and had trained his machine-gun straight ahead through the gas. The Germans could not see him, and they fell in heaps, until the remnant lost heart and retired defeated. No German soldier set foot in that

trench which the valour of one man had saved.

Meanwhile, reinforcements had been brought up and the Lancashire Fusiliers prepared to charge and recover the trench which they had given up for lost. What was their amazement on discovering it tenanted, not by the enemy, but by Lynn, now in the last stage of exhaustion, but still firing his gun from the top of the parapet. They lifted him up and tenderly carried him away to a dug-out. Not even then did the hero's spirit fail him. A short time after, the alarm was given for a second attack. Lynn left the dug-out at once and made a frantic effort to reach his gun. It was too late. The deadly poison had done its work. Only those who have seen the sufferings caused by gas-poisoning can realize the agonies endured before death, more merciful than the German, released him from his pain twenty-four hours later.

"Somewhere in France" Lynn sleeps his last sleep, but he has a place in our hearts and memories, in the imperishable records of our fighting race.

How Corporal James Upton, of the 1st Battalion, Sherwood Foresters, won the Victoria Cross at Rouges Bancs.

On Sunday, May 9th, 1915, in conjunction with a forward movement of the French troops between the right of our line and Arras, our 1st Corps and the Indian Corps attacked the German position between Neuve Chapelle and Givenchy, while the 8th Division of the 4th Corps attacked the enemy's trenches in the neighbourhood of Rouges Bancs, to the north-west of Fromelles. Our artillery preparations at Rouges Bancs began shortly before 5 a.m., and half an hour later our infantry advanced to the assault of the German trenches, which were separated from ours by a distance of some two hundred and fifty yards, the intervening ground being destitute of every vestige of cover. The attack was started by the East Lancashires and two companies of the 1st Sherwood Foresters; but the artillery preparation had been altogether inadequate, and our men came up against unbroken wire and parapets. Many casualties occurred during the advance, and many more during the subsequent retirement.

About 7 a.m., after a second bombardment of the enemy's position, the remaining two companies of the 1st Sherwood Foresters scaled the parapet and lined up about thirty yards in front of it, where they lay down in a shallow trench to await the order to advance. With them was a young Lincolnshire man, Corporal James Upton, who on that day was destined to win the most coveted distinction of the British soldier.

The ground in front of the Sherwoods was strewn with the wounded, some of them terribly mutilated, and their cries for help were heart-rending. At last Corporal Upton could listen to them no longer; come what might, he was resolved to go to their succour.

Crawling out of the trench, he made his way towards the enemy's lines, and had not gone far when he came upon a sergeant of the Worcesters, who was wounded in the thigh, the leg being broken. Upton bandaged him up as well as he could with an old flag, and put his leg in splints, which done he carried him on his back to our trench and consigned him to the care of some of his comrades. Then, discarding his pack and the rest of his equipment, which included a couple of jam-tin bombs, he went out again and found another man, who had been

hit in the stomach. As this man was too big and heavy to carry, he unrolled his waterproof sheet, placed him on it, and dragged him in. Going out for the third time, he was proceeding to carry in a man with both legs shattered, and had got within ten yards of the trench, when a high-explosive shell burst close to them. A piece of it struck the wounded man in the back, killing him instantaneously, and giving Upton, though he escaped unhurt, a bad shock. This obliged him to rest for a while, but so soon as he felt better the heroic non-commissioned officer resumed his work of mercy, and, venturing out again and again into the fire-swept open, succeeded in rescuing no less than ten more wounded men. During the remainder of the day, until eight at night, he was engaged in dressing the serious cases in front of our trenches, exposed the whole time to a heavy artillery and rifle fire, from which, however, he emerged without a scratch.

Corporal Upton, who was awarded the Victoria Cross " for most conspicuous bravery," is twenty-six years of age, and his home is at Lincoln.

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. S. Bagdatopulos.*

Corporal James Upton dragging a wounded comrade on a waterprcof sheet to the trenches.

[*Facing p.* 180.

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston*

A shell explodes and knocks over Lance-Corporal D. Finlay.

[*Facing p.* 181.

How Lance-Corporal David Finlay, of the 2nd Battalion, The Black Watch, Royal Highlanders, won the Victoria Cross near the Rue du Bois.

On Sunday, May 9th, 1915, the French began their great attack on the German position between La Targette and Carency, the advance of the infantry being preceded by the most terrific bombardments yet seen in Western Europe, which simply ate up the countryside for miles. On the same day, chiefly as an auxiliary to the effort of our Allies in the Artois, the British took the offensive in the Festubert area, the section selected being that between Festubert and Bois Grenier. The 8th Division, on our left, advanced from Rouges Bancs, on the upper course of the River des Layes, towards Fromelles and the northern part of the Aubers Ridge; while, on our right, part of the 1st Corps and the Indian Corps advanced from the Rue du Bois, south of Neuve Chapelle, towards the Bois du Biez.

The 8th Division captured the first line of German trenches about Rouges Bancs, and some detachments carried sections of their second and

even their third line. But the violence of the enemy's machine-gun fire from fortified posts on the flanks rendered the captured trenches untenable, and practically all the ground the valour of our men had won had to be abandoned.

South of Neuve Chapelle, the 1st Corps and the Indian Corps met with no greater success, though they displayed the utmost gallantry in the face of a most murderous fire, and many acts of signal heroism were performed, notably that which gained Lance-Corporal David Finlay, of the 2nd Black Watch, the Victoria Cross.

The Bareilly Brigade, of which the 2nd Black Watch formed part, attacked early in the afternoon; but, while our artillery preparation was still in progress, Lance-Corporal Finlay advanced at the head of a bombing-party of ten men, with the object of getting as near the enemy's trenches as they could under cover of the bombardment. It was a desperate enterprise, for the German parapet bristled with machine-guns, and each one of the party knew that his chance of returning in safety was slight indeed.

About fifteen or twenty yards from our trenches, which were separated by some hundred and fifty yards from the German, was a ditch

full of water, ten to twelve feet wide and between four and five feet deep, spanned by three bridges. The party had got as far as the ditch before the enemy realized that they were advancing; when a fierce rifle and machine-gun fire was at once opened upon them, and eight out of Finlay's ten men were put out of action, as all made for one of the bridges. Two were shot dead while crossing the bridge, and the others killed or wounded immediately upon reaching the other side.

Undismayed by the fate of their comrades, Finlay and the two survivors rushed on, and had covered about eighty yards when a shell burst just behind Finlay. He was uninjured, but so violent was the concussion that it knocked him flat on his back, and he lost consciousness for some ten minutes. When he recovered his senses, he saw one of his two men lying on the ground about five paces to his left, and, crawling to him, he found that he had been wounded in two places. He opened his field-dressing and bandaged him up, and then, quite regardless of his own safety, half-carried and half-dragged him back to the British trench.

Lance-Corporal, now Sergeant, David Finlay, who was awarded the Victoria Cross, " for most

conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty," is twenty-two years of age, and his home is in Fifeshire.

How Lieut.-Commander M. E. Nasmith won the V.C. for his Exploits in the Sea of Marmora in E11.

The Prime Minister was able to announce early in November, 1915, that over two hundred Turkish warships, transports and supply ships had been sunk or damaged by our submarines in the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora. This was the result of almost exactly six months' constant effort, and because the total was so great it might with some show of reason be assumed that the task itself was a fairly simple one. The story of every individual submarine, however, brings home very forcibly the reality of the ever-present dangers that had to be faced and circumvented, and the manner in which E11 won the V.C. for her commander and a decoration for everyone else on board is second to none in this respect.

The spring of 1915 found the E11 attached to the fleet in the Mediterranean, and, with Lieut.-Commander Martin Eric Nasmith in charge,

Painted specially for this work.] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Lance-Corporal D. Finlay dragging a wounded comrade into the trenches while under fire.

[*Facing p.* 184.

Painted specially for this work] [*By Montague Dawson.*

A fair hit. A Turkish gunboat torpedoed by Ell.

[*Facing p.* 185.

she proceeded to make history at a rapid rate. It was in the middle of May that she left for her perilous passage through the Dardanelles, and before she was through them she ran across her first patch of excitement. When the Narrows had been successfully negotiated and the submarine rose to get fresh bearings, two battleships were seen to be lying a little further on. Such an opportunity was not to be let slip without an effort, and, necessarily keeping the periscope above water, Lieut.-Commander Nasmith at once proceeded to put his boat in a suitable position for launching a torpedo.

Unfortunately, the Turks sighted the periscope a minute or two too soon, and instantly the battleships began blazing away with their light guns as hard as they could. At the same time, they "upped anchor" and got under way, so there was nothing for it for the E11 but to dive and hide herself until the furore had subsided. She was far too slow to catch the battleships if she ran submerged, and if she rose to the surface she would almost certainly have been breached by a shell. After a little, therefore, she gently settled herself on the bottom of the Straits, and there she remained until dusk.

That same evening she pushed on into the Sea

of Marmora, where for several days she alternately rested and cruised about, without finding anything that was worth the expenditure of a torpedo. Lieut.-Commander Nasmith made Constantinople the centre of his operations during the whole of this raid, and his first reward came one Sunday morning, just before half-past six, when a big gunboat was seen cruising off the port. The submarine was ready for instant action, and in less than a minute the fatal torpedo was under way. At 6.25 the gunboat was hit; at 6.30 she had sunk—but not without giving the E11 something of a shock. While she was heeling well over to the water's edge, a shot was fired that went clean through the submarine's periscope, carrying away about four inches of the diameter a few feet from the base, and leaving the rest standing. Had the shot struck about six feet lower it would very probably have made a breach in the conning-tower and so rendered the submarine helpless, as she would not have been able to dive.

The very next day brought an adventure which, if it was not so exciting, at any rate did not lack in interest. A big steamer was sighted making her way from Constantinople towards the Dardanelles, and the E11 came to the surface

a short distance ahead, fired a shot across her bows, and brought her to a standstill. There happened to be a facetious American newspaper correspondent on board, and when Lieut.-Commander Nasmith hailed, "Who are you?"—meaning, of course, to inquire what the ship was and what was her business—this gentleman replied by giving his own name and that of the paper for which he was working.

This was not good enough for the E11. A few more questions elicited the fact that the ship was a Turkish transport, the *Nagara*, and when he got as far as that Nasmith promptly replied: "Right. I am going to sink you." "May we have time to get off?" queried the newspaper man, by this time rather subdued. "Yes," came the answer from the submarine, "but be damn quick about it!"

The Turks were so quick that they upset two of their boats in lowering them, and capsized several men into the water, though all of them managed to get into safety again. Then Lieut.-Commander Nasmith went on board the ship to see what she carried. There was a 6-inch gun, destined to strengthen the forts on the Dardanelles; there were several sets of mountings for weapons of large calibre, and there was a

great quantity of ammunition for heavy guns on its way to the Dardanelles. The ship was, in fact, loaded from keel to upper deck with war material; and when the crew—and the American correspondent—had withdrawn to a safe distance, the submarine drew off, fired a torpedo, and sent the ship to the bottom.

The most audacious act of the E11 was her raid on Constantinople itself. Early one morning, while she was slowly cruising off the mouth of the harbour, she hailed a Turkish merchantman to stop; but the enemy ignored the demand and ran for all he was worth towards the harbour, with the E11 in hot pursuit. It may have been this incident that gave Nasmith his inspiration; but however that may be, the E11 found herself early one morning lying actually within the port of Constantinople itself. Observations were cautiously taken, and it was seen that a number of enemy transports were lying alongside the wharves and that some of them actually had troops on board.

The harbour of Constantinople is traversed by tricky currents, and although the E11 fired two torpedoes, neither of them hit the object at which it was aimed. Nasmith's intention was, of course, to sink the transports; and

although the first torpedo did not do that, it blew up a barge with such force that the transport *Stamboul*, lying close by, was so badly damaged that she had to be run ashore in order to save herself from sinking. The second torpedo did not hit a ship; but it exploded against the quayside and destroyed a considerable length of it.

In the Turkish capital itself the moral effect of this attack was tremendous. Hearing the explosion of the two torpedoes and the noise of the guns which the Turkish batteries went on firing long after the E11 was safely out of sight, the civil population jumped to the conclusion that the Allied Fleet had arrived before their city. Thousands of them fled to the hills behind the town; most of the shops put up their shutters; and after the Turkish officers had vainly attempted to control the panic-stricken soldiers on board the transports with their swords and revolvers, all the men were marched ashore and the transports left empty. It was several days before the capital settled down again.

This by no means ended the thrilling experiences of the E11. Before she set out on her return journey from the Sea of Marmora she had

sunk in all one large gunboat, two transports, three store-ships and one ammunition ship (the *Nagara*), and had forced another store-ship to run ashore; and when, on her way back, she was about to enter the Dardanelles again, Lieut.-Commander Nasmith sighted another transport coming up astern, and he waited until she came along and then torpedoed her and sent her to the bottom. In all, the E11 destroyed eleven ships—no bad record for a small vessel with a crew of thirty officers and men, who had to face the gravest perils single-handed from the time they entered the Dardanelles until they left them.

On the way out these perils were encountered in a most alarming form. As the E11 was making her way seawards beneath the surface, those on board became aware of a resistance which was not of the sea, and every now and then a faint bump was heard against the vessel's side. Instinctively and instantly everyone on board realized what had happened. The submarine had fouled the cable by which a floating mine was chained to its anchor on the sea-bed, and the cable, instead of slipping past the smooth hull, had somehow become entangled in the forward hydroplanes. Any one of those

ominous bumps might suffice to explode the mine and send the submarine to the bottom like a log. It was impossible for Nasmith to manœuvre his boat in an effort to get rid of the thing, for he was passing through the most thickly-mined area of the whole Straits, and any deviation from the set course would almost certainly have taken the boat straight to destruction. Nor could he rise to the surface and send a man out to detach the machine, for the churning screws of the patrol boats could be heard overhead. There was nothing for it but to carry on as slowly and as carefully as possible, and to trust to Providence.

For eleven miles the submarine crept on, with sudden death dangling from her bows—a death from which those on board were saved only by the lightness of the bumps by which the mine had announced itself. A sharp blow would have detonated it. One can imagine what feelings of relief there were when the boat at last reached an area where she could "break surface" in safety. Once afloat again, it did not take long to disentangle the cable and drop the mine over the side.

His splendid services brought Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith the award of the Victoria

Cross, while the two other officers on board, Lieut. Guy D'Oyly-Hughes and Lieut. Robert Brown (R.N.R.), received the Distinguished Service Cross. All the petty officers and men were granted the D.S.M.

How Company Sergeant-Major Frederick Barter, Special Reserve, attached 1st Battalion, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, won the Victoria Cross at Festubert.

At daybreak on May 16th, 1915, after very effective artillery preparation, which swept away the German wire-entanglements as though they had been matchwood, and in places almost obliterated their trenches, the British infantry attacked the enemy's position immediately east of Festubert, where their front showed a pronounced salient. Two brigades of the 7th Division—the 20th and 22nd—and part of the 2nd Division and the Indian Corps were the troops to which the movement was entrusted. The latter attacked on the left near Richebourg l'Avoué; the 20th Brigade moved from Rue du Bois south-eastward; while the 22nd Brigade advanced to the south-east of Festubert against the Rue d'Ouvert.

The most successful movement was that of the 22nd Brigade on our right, composed of the 2nd Queen's, 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers and the 1st South Staffords, with the 2nd Warwicks and the 8th Royal Scots in support, which advanced for more than a mile and succeeded in reaching the enemy's main communication trench near the Rue d'Ouvert.

The German entrenchments in the Festubert area were curiously complicated, forming, in fact, a veritable network, and this circumstance naturally put a premium on bomb-throwing, the old eighteenth-century weapon being the most efficient we possessed for close-quarter fighting. Brilliant work was done by the bombers of the 1st Grenadiers, in the 20th Brigade, and by a party of the Civil Service Rifles, led by a sergeant of the Post Office Rifles, on the following day, the four survivors each being awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. But these feats were surpassed by that performed by a party of the 1st Welsh Fusiliers, led by Company Sergeant-Major Barter.

When his battalion reached the first line of German trenches, Barter called for bomb-throwers to enable him to extend our line. With the eight volunteers who responded, he

proceeded to deal out death and mutilation on so wholesale a scale that in a very short time he had cleared five hundred yards of hostile trenches and captured three officers and one hundred and two men, besides finding and cutting eleven mine-leads, situated about twenty yards apart.

For this most splendid exploit, worthy to rank with that of Sergeant Michael O'Leary at Cuinchy, Company Sergeant-Major Barter was awarded the Victoria Cross, while subsequently he was promoted to the rank of Second Lieutenant. He is a Cardiff man, and having served his time with the colours, was, when war broke out, in the employment of the Cardiff Gas Company as a gas-stove fitter.

Any account of the famous bomb exploit at Festubert would be incomplete without mention of a mystery connected with one of the party, which his death on this occasion served to clear up. Among the eight men who assisted Lieutenant Barter was a private of the 2nd Queen's named Thomas Hardy, who had been temporarily attached to the Welsh Fusiliers for training in bomb-throwing, in which he made astonishing progress.

Hardy was a man of splendid physique, obviously a gentleman, and so proficient in his

military duties that Barter, with whom he soon became on intimate terms, began to suspect that he was an officer who had left the Service possibly under a cloud, and had enlisted under an assumed name.

His suspicions proved, in the main, to be correct, for one day "Hardy" admitted to him that his real name was Smart, and that he had been a captain in the 53rd Sikhs, and that, being on leave in England at the time when war broke out, he had decided not to return to India, but to join a British regiment as a private in order to make sure of getting to the front. He begged Barter to keep the fact a secret while he lived, but, should he be killed in action, he might then consider himself at liberty to make it public.

In the bomb-attack, Private "Hardy" showed such splendid courage that, in Lieutenant Barter's opinion, he would, had he survived, have certainly been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. "He was," said he, in conversation with a representative of a London paper, "about ten yards from the first German trench when he got wounded. It was a terrible blow in the right shoulder. Some of our men bound up the wound, and I shouted, 'Hardy, go back!'

I could see, however, that he was determined to go at the enemy. 'Hardy' answered: 'It's all right, for I am left-handed.'

"The next thing I saw was 'Hardy' rushing off to our right, and, with the bravery which seemed his characteristic, he commenced to slam the bombs at the enemy. He carried on like that for about twenty or thirty yards, and he was eventually shot through the head, half of which was blown off. He died a hero's death, and no one regretted his end more than I did, for I was probably attached to him more than anyone else, and was afforded opportunities of seeing his sterling worth. . . . 'Hardy' was a man of splendid physique—I should say he was quite six feet high, and there can be no doubt of this, that he was six feet of real manhood. A more fearless fellow it would be impossible to find. We all loved him. I have never seen a happier man. He seemed to live to beat the Germans."

As the result of the May fighting in the Festubert area, we made considerable gains, piercing the German lines on a total front of four miles, and capturing their entire first-line system of trenches for two miles, and on the remaining portion both the first and second lines. But our losses were very heavy, particularly among the

commissioned ranks, and the 22nd Brigade lost three of its battalion commanders, those of the 1st Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the 2nd Queen's and the 8th Royal Scots.

How Lieutenant Smyth, of the 15th Sikhs, won the V.C. at the Ferme du Bois.

There are no finer fighting men in our Indian Army than the Sikhs, the descendants of those fierce, long-haired warriors who fought so stubbornly against us at Firozshah and Chillianwala, and afterwards stood so loyally by the British Raj in the dark days of the Mutiny. And there are no finer officers in the world than the men who lead them, for no youngster stands a chance of being gazetted to a Sikh regiment who has not shown that he possesses in a marked degree all the qualities which are likely to ensure the confidence and devotion of those whom he aspires to command.

When the first Indian contingent disembarked at Marseilles in the early autumn of 1914, there were some armchair critics who expressed doubts as to whether, under conditions of warfare so totally different from those with which he was familiar, the native soldier might not be found

wanting. But these sceptics were speedily confounded, for, however strange and terrifying might be the sight of the destruction wrought by hand-grenades and high-explosive shells; however trying the long vigils in trenches knee-deep in mud and water, the Sepoy accepted it all with Oriental stoicism, and wherever his officer led, he cheerfully followed, though it was into the very jaws of death.

And on many a desperate enterprise, on many a forlorn hope, did these officers lead him, but surely on none more so than that on which Lieutenant Smyth, of the 15th Sikhs, led his little band of dark-skinned heroes on May 18th, 1915!

On the previous night, a company of the 15th, under Captain Hyde Cates, had relieved a part of the 1st Battalion, Highland Light Infantry, in a section of a trench known as the "Glory Hole," near the Ferme du Bois, on the right front of the Indian Army Corps. Here for some time fighting of a peculiarly fierce and sanguinary character had been in progress; and the position of affairs at the moment when the Sikhs replaced the Highlanders was that our men were in occupation of a section of a German trench, the remaining portion being still held by the

enemy, who had succeeded in erecting a strong barricade between themselves and the British.

Towards dawn, Captain Cates observed that the Germans were endeavouring to reinforce their comrades in the trench, as numbers of men were seen doubling across the open towards its further extremity. He immediately ordered the Sikhs to fire upon them, but, in the dim light, they presented exceedingly difficult targets; and when morning broke, it was ascertained that the German trench was packed with men, who were evidently meditating an attack.

Shortly afterwards, in fact, a perfect hail of bombs began to fall among the Indians, who replied vigorously, and, to judge from the shrieks and curses which came from the other side of the barricade, with considerable effect, until, towards noon, their supply of bombs began to fail, many of them having been so damaged by the rain which had fallen during the night as to be quite useless. The situation was a critical one; only the speedy arrival of a bombing-party from the reserve trenches could enable them to hold out.

The reserve trenches were some two hundred and fifty yards distant, and the ground between so exposed to the fire of the enemy as to render

the despatch of reinforcements a most desperate undertaking. Twice had the Highland Light Infantry made the attempt, and on both occasions the officer in command had been killed, and the party practically wiped out.

Nevertheless, the Sikhs were resolved to take their chance, and, on volunteers being called for, such was the magnificent spirit of the regiment that every man stepped forward, though no one doubted that, if his services were accepted, almost certain death awaited him.

Ten men were selected and placed under the command of Lieutenant Smyth, a young officer of one-and-twenty, who had already distinguished himself on more than one occasion by his dashing courage. The names of these ten heroes deserve to be remembered. They were: Sepoys Fatteh Singh, Ganda Singh, Harnam Singh, Lal Singh, Naik Mangal Singh, Sarain Singh, Sapooram Singh, Sucha Singh, Sunder Singh, and Ujagar Singh.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, Lieutenant Smyth and his little band set out on their perilous enterprise, taking with them two boxes containing ninety-six bombs. The ground which they had to traverse was absolutely devoid of all natural cover. The only approach to shelter

from the terrific fire which greeted them the moment they showed their heads above the parapet of our reserve trenches, was an old, partially demolished trench, which at the best of times was hardly knee-deep, but was now in places literally choked with the corpses of Highland Light Infantry, Worcesters, Indians and Germans.

Dropping over the parapet, they threw themselves flat on the ground and painfully wriggled their way through the mud, pulling and pushing the boxes along with them, until they reached the scanty shelter afforded by the old trench, where they commenced a progress which for sheer horror can seldom have been surpassed.

By means of pagris attached to the boxes the men in front pulled them along, over and through the dead bodies that encumbered the trench, while those behind pushed with all their might. The danger was enough to have appalled the stoutest heart. Rifle and machine-gun bullets ripped up the ground all around them, while the air above was white with the puffs of shrapnel. If a single bullet, a single fragment of shell, penetrated one of the boxes of explosives, the men propelling it would infallibly be blown to pieces.

Before they had advanced a score of yards on their terrible journey, Fatteh Singh fell, severely wounded; in another hundred, Sucha Singh, Ujagar Singh and Sunder Singh had also fallen, thus leaving only Lieutenant Smyth and six men to get the boxes along. However, spurred on by the thought of the dire necessity of their comrades ahead, they, by superhuman efforts, succeeded in dragging them nearly to the end of the trench, when, in quick succession, Sarain Singh and Sapooram Singh were shot dead, while Ganda Singh, Harnam Singh and Naik Mangal Singh were wounded. The second box of bombs had therefore to be abandoned, and for the two remaining men to haul even one box along in the face of such difficulties appeared an impossible task.

But nothing was impossible to the young lieutenant and the heroic Lal Singh, and presently the anxious watchers in the trench ahead saw them wriggling their way yard by yard into the open, dragging with them the box upon the safe arrival of which so much depended.

As they emerged from the comparative shelter of the trench, a veritable hail of lead burst upon them, but, escaping it as though by a miracle, they crawled on until they found themselves

confronted by a small stream, which at this point was too deep to wade. They had, therefore, to turn aside and crawl along the bank of the stream until they came to a place which was just fordable.

Across this they struggled with their precious burden, the water all about them churned into foam by the storm of bullets, clambered up the further bank, and in a minute more were amongst their cheering comrades. Both were unhurt, though their clothes were perforated by bullet-holes; but it is sad to relate that scarcely had they reached the trench than the gallant Lal Singh was struck by a bullet and killed instantly.

For his "most conspicuous bravery" Lieutenant Smyth received the Victoria Cross, and each of the brave men who accompanied him the Indian Distinguished Service Medal, and we may be very certain that "ne'er will their glory fade" from the proud records of our Indian Army.

It is, we may mention, the universal opinion of the men of the 15th Sikhs that Smyth Sahib bears a charmed life, since again and again he has escaped death by a hairsbreadth, on one occasion a match with which he was lighting a cigarette being taken out of his fingers by a bullet.

How Lance-Corporal Jacka won the V.C. by recapturing a Trench Single-handed.

On May 10th, 1915, a small party of the 14th Australian Battalion, who were holding a short section of trench at Courtney's Post, were overwhelmed by the Turks outside the parapet, all the men who were throwing bombs being wounded. Seven or eight Turks then jumped in, and this section of the trench was for the moment left only to a wounded officer, who went to see the situation. This officer, coming back through the communication trench, said, "They have got me; the Turks are in the trench."

Lance-Corporal Jacka immediately jumped from the communication trench up to the step, or bench, behind the last traverse of the section of the fire trench which had not yet been reached by the Turks. He was exposed for a moment to the Turks' rifles, at a distance of three yards. The Turks were afraid to cross round the traverse, and he held them there for a considerable time alone.

Meanwhile, the word had gone back, "Officer wanted." Lieutenant Hamilton saw the Turks jumping into the trench, and began firing with

his revolver, but the Turks shot him through the head. A second officer was sent up. Then Jacka shouted, "Look out, sir, the Turks are in here." The officer asked Jacka if he would charge if he (the officer) got some men to back him up, and Jacka said "Yes." The officer's platoon was following him, and he called for volunteers. "It's a tough job. Will you back Jacka up?" One of the leading men answered, "It's a sink or swim; we will come, sir," and the leading three men went forward. The moment the leading man put his head round the corner he was hit in three places, and fell back, blocking the trench.

The exit from the trench at this end now being well held, Jacka jumped back from the fire trench into the communication trench. The officer told Jacka that he would hold the exit and give the Turks the impression that he was going to charge again. Jacka said he would make his way round through a communication trench to the other end of the fire trench at the rear of the Turks. This plan worked excellently. The officer's party threw two bombs and fired several shots into the wall of the trench opposite them.

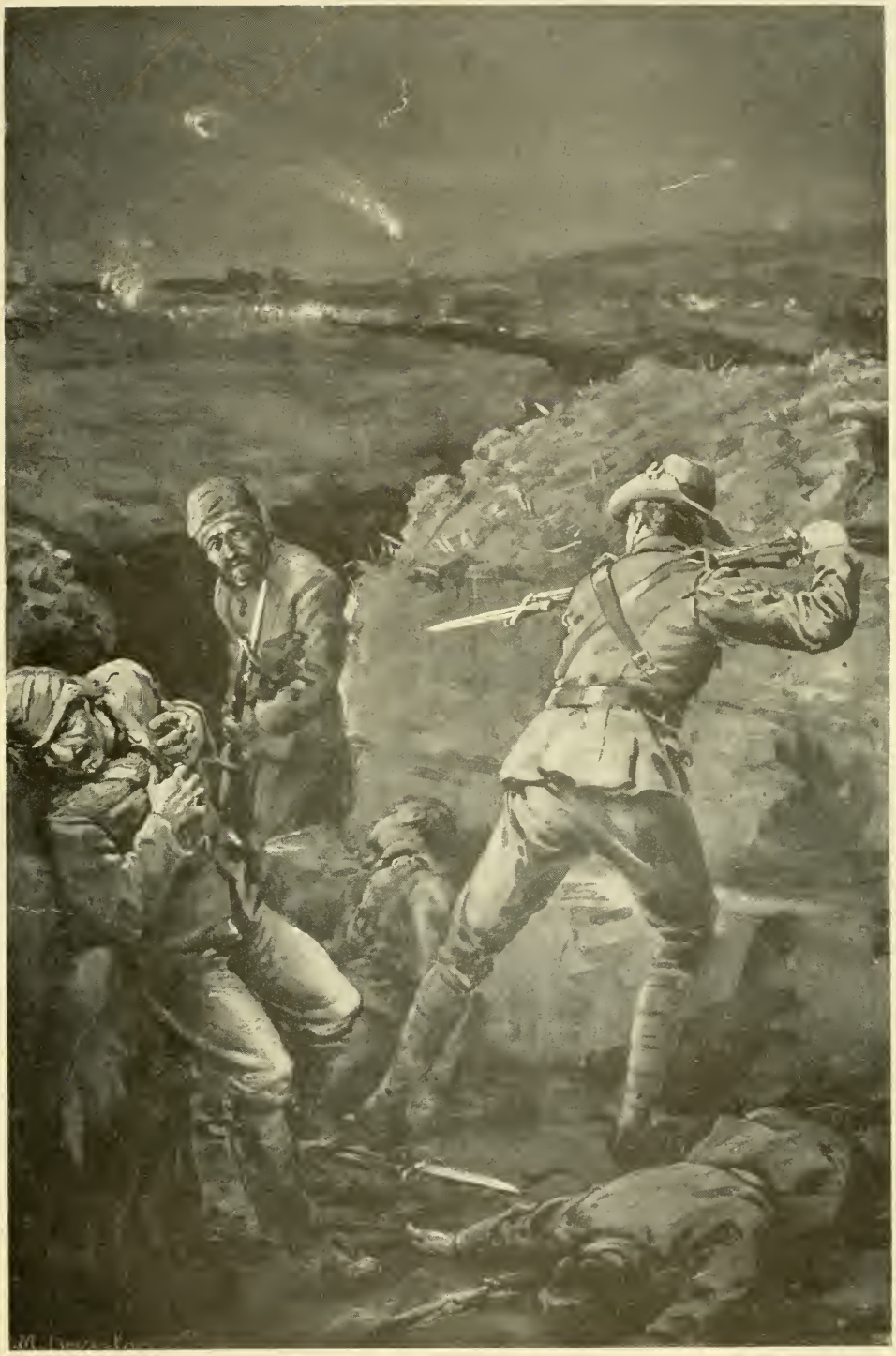
Jacka made his way round, and a moment

after the bombs were thrown he reached a portion of the trench just behind the Turks. The party in front heard shots and charged, but when they reached the trench only four Turks came crawling over the parapet. These Turks were shot, and Jacka was found in the trench with an unlighted cigarette in his mouth and with a flushed face.

"I managed to get the beggars, sir," he said. In front of him was a trench literally blocked with Turks. He had shot five, and had just finished bayoneting the remaining two. One of them was only wounded, and was taken prisoner.

How Lance-Corporal Leonard James Keyworth, of the 24th (County of London) Battalion, The London Regiment (The Queen's) (T. F.) won the V.C. at Givenchy.

One of those acts of almost incredible bravery and contempt for death, the account of which reads more like a page from the most extravagant of the romances of adventure than sober fact, was performed during the British attack on the enemy's position at Givenchy on the



Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Lance-Corporal Jacka wins a V.C. by showing how one man can beat seven.

[*Facing p.* 206.

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. S. Bagdatopulos.*

Lance-Corporal J. Keyworth stands fully exposed for two hours on the enemy's parapet and throws about 150 bombs amongst the Germans.

night of May 25th–26th, 1915. The hero of it was a young Territorial of twenty-two, Lance-Corporal Leonard James Keyworth, of the 24th Battalion, London Regiment.

Keyworth's battalion having already made a successful assault on a part of the German line, determined to follow up this success by a bomb-attack. The bomb-throwers, to the number of seventy-five, advanced to the attack from a small British trench situated on a slight hill, less than forty yards from the enemy's first-line trenches; but though the distance was short, the ground between had been so badly cut up by shell-fire that they could not progress very rapidly, and before they were half-way across, the majority of them had already fallen beneath the withering fire from rifle and machine-gun which was opened upon them. But the rest, undismayed by the fate of their comrades, came bravely on, and among them was Lance-Corporal Keyworth.

Halting a few yards from the parapet, Keyworth began to throw his bombs. Then, springing on to the top of the parapet itself, he took deliberate aim at the Germans beneath him and rained his deadly missiles upon them with the most murderous effect. When his stock was

exhausted, he leaped down, replenished it from the bag of some dead or dying comrade, and then returned to the attack. For two hours he continued thus, hurling, it is computed, one hundred and fifty bombs on the panic-stricken Huns, until the trench was a veritable shambles, choked with the bodies of the dead and of shrieking, mutilated wretches, and presenting an easy prey. And, marvellous to relate, though out of his seventy-four comrades no less than fifty-eight were either killed or wounded, and though he was continually standing fully exposed on the top of the parapet, so near to the Germans they could well-nigh have touched him with the muzzles of their rifles, Keyworth escaped without a scratch. Which goes to show that daredevil bravery such as he displayed on this occasion is often its own justification, creating as it does in the minds of an enemy a degree of amazement and consternation which renders him quite incapable of opposing it with his usual coolness and courage.

Lance-Corporal Keyworth, who joined the 24th London Regiment at the beginning of the war, was born at Lincoln on August 12th, 1893, and his home is in that town.

How Flight Sub-Lieutenant R. A. J. Warneford, R.N., destroyed a Zeppelin and won the V.C.

Although aerial warfare is so young as to have had scarcely any history before 1914, it is doubtful if it will ever produce a more brilliant or daring exploit than that which won the Victoria Cross for Reginald Warneford. This young officer was only entered into the Naval Air Service as a probationer in February, 1915, and within four months he had worthily earned the highest award "For Valour" that the King can bestow.

It was the German custom to send their huge Zeppelin airships on short cruises over the North Sea, in order to get their crews into training for raids on England. In the early morning of June 7th, 1915, one of these monsters was returning from such a cruise when she was sighted by Flight Sub-Lieutenant Warneford, who was out on a lonely scouting expedition in a fast Morane monoplane. The intrepid airman, with nothing in sight to help him against the 600-foot ship, did not hesitate a moment, but immediately set off in pursuit. As he approached nearer and

nearer, the Zeppelin opened fire on him with machine-guns and heavier weapons; but still he kept on in his one-man machine, aiming always to get above his enemy, so that he might be able to drop his bombs—the only weapons he carried.

The Zeppelin was flying her hardest to reach her shed at Gontrode, a trifle to the south of Ghent; but as she saw the little British monoplane gaining upon her, unharmed by the fusillade from her guns, she made that manœuvre which is one of the Zeppelin's best forms of defence. She dropped a quantity of ballast and shot suddenly to a height of 6,000 feet.

The aeroplane is a slow climber compared with a gas-filled airship, but it was not in young Warneford to give up the chase. He set the nose of his machine into the air and doggedly followed his quarry. At that moment he could hardly help thinking that his efforts would be in vain; but suddenly, as they neared Ghent, the airship began to glide towards the earth. Her station was almost in sight, where she would find herself ringed by friends to protect her from her still silent pursuer.

This anxiety for safety spelt her doom. As the Zeppelin dipped earthwards, so Warneford

flew on and higher—on until at last he was racing along fair above the German ship. It was just the position he had been praying for, and, very methodically and carefully, he began to drop his bombs. Four of them he released in quick succession, and the Zeppelin, fairly struck from a height of less than 200 feet, was quickly enveloped in a cloud of smoke. She drifted on, unmanageable, past the haven of refuge for which she had been making, and Warneford, dropping still lower, loosed his last missiles upon her; and what had been a majestic airship but a few minutes before suddenly crashed to the ground a mass of twisted metal and blazing fabric. Her crew of twenty-eight officers and men were all killed in the fall, or burned to death in the flames, and by a great misfortune the flaming ruin fell upon a convent in the Ghent suburb of Mont St. Amand, causing the loss of several innocent lives.

Warneford had accomplished his task magnificently; but his own perils were not yet ended. The violence of the explosion caused by his last attack on the Zeppelin had been so great as to throw his aeroplane upside down in mid-air; but with a coolness almost beyond belief he

succeeded in righting her—only to find that his petrol tanks had been drained dry while his machine hung reversed in the skies.

There was nothing for it but to plane to earth —in the midst of territory thickly occupied by hostile troops. Choosing his landing-place with deliberation he came down perfectly; and, leaping from his seat, proceeded to fill his tank from the reserve tins of petrol he carried. The British reports say the task took him fifteen minutes: the French say thirty-five; but however that may be he accomplished it in safety, and was able to soar into the air and away into safety just as hurrying bodies of the enemy opened fire on him with their rifles and machine-guns. He got back to his base unharmed, the first airman in history to destroy a Zeppelin in flight.

This was not the only "record" he made. Within thirty-six hours of the airship's destruction he had received the following telegram from the King: "I most heartily congratulate you upon your splendid achievement of yesterday, in which you, single-handed, destroyed an enemy Zeppelin. I have much pleasure in conferring upon you the Victoria Cross for this gallant act. —GEORGE, R.I."

Painted specially for this work] [*By Arthur Burgess.*

Flight Sub-Lieutenant R. A. J. Warneford, R.N., blows up a Zeppelin airship between Ghent and Brussels, following which his aeroplane turns upside down.

[*Facing p.* 212.

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Lieutenant Martin, of the Highland Light Infantry, is sighted moving close to the enemy's parapet.

[*Facing p.* 213.

Never had the Cross been awarded so quickly after the deed that earned it; never had the recipient been advised of his distinction by a telegram from the reigning Sovereign. The whole nation applauded both the award and the King's promptness in making it; and our Allies, the French, showed their appreciation by making the gallant officer a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour.

Great as were these distinctions, however, Warneford was not destined to enjoy them for long. Just ten days later, while testing a new aeroplane at a Paris aerodrome, he was dashed to earth from a height of 700 feet and killed instantly, exactly four months and a week from the date of his entry into the Royal Naval Air Service.

How Lance-Corporal William Angus, of the 8th (Lanark) Battalion, Highland Light Infantry (Territorial Force), won the V.C. at Givenchy.

Before the Great War broke out there was a decided disinclination in certain quarters to take our Territorial forces quite seriously, and even our old friend "Mr. Punch" could not resist

the temptation of occasionally making their supposed ignorance of their duties the object of his genial satire. No one, of course, doubted their pluck or their patriotic spirit, but there were many who contended that their brief period of annual training was far too short to be of any real value, and that, in the event of war, many months of strenuous work would be required to fit them to take their place in the field by the side of seasoned troops.

Never were critics more speedily confounded. For, though, at the outset, necessarily much inferior in such matters as marksmanship, quickness in taking cover, and reconnoitring, to the regular soldier, with months, or sometimes years, of continuous training behind him, the intelligence and enthusiasm of the young man from the office or the shop enabled him to master his duties with astonishing rapidity, while in courage and tenacity he very quickly showed that he had little or nothing to learn from his professional comrade. Indeed, it was a Scottish Territorial who was the hero of what, in the opinion of one who witnessed it, must be regarded as one of the most magnificent acts of gallantry and devotion that the modern battlefield has ever seen.

On the night of June 11th–12th, 1915, during the engagement at Givenchy, a party of the Lanarkshire Territorials (8th Battalion, Highland Light Infantry), under the command of Lieutenant Martin, a young officer whose unfailing good humour and pluck had made him exceedingly popular, was sent out for the purpose of destroying a German barricade. Some sharp fighting ensued, and, while this was at its height, a powerful German mine was fired, either intentionally or by accident.

When the Scotsmen returned to the British trenches, it was found that Lieutenant Martin was missing, and though several of his men volunteered to go back and search for him, and crawled about in all directions in the darkness, they could discover no trace of him. When day broke, however, one of the British sentries caught sight of someone moving in the midst of a mass of loose earth close to the parapet of the German trench. It was the missing officer, who had been wounded and stunned by the explosion of the mine, and half-buried by the débris which it had raised, and who now, having recovered consciousness, was endeavouring to work his way clear of the earth which was pinning him down.

There he lay, right at the foot of the German parapet, only some ten feet of earth between him and the most pitiless enemy that ever waged an unholy war. His very nearness to them hid him from their view, but already they must have heard him moving, for presently, when the sun was a little higher, the ugly head of a periscope, with its ghoulish eye, was thrust up from the German trench, and leered at the wounded officer below. A rifle rang out from the British lines, and a well-aimed bullet smashed the periscope to pieces, and though the Germans essayed repeatedly by the same means to ascertain Lieutenant Martin's exact position, our marksmen shattered each periscope the moment it appeared.

For the British had been fighting the unspeakable Hun too long to entertain the illusion that the enemy wished to discover where the wounded man lay with any idea of throwing him a rope and drawing him in. They did not even expect them to be merciful and kill him. No; they intended to leave him there in the cruel glare of a cloudless June sky, to serve as a bait to lure some gallant British soldier to his death, and it was to ascertain the spot upon which their bombs might be most

effectively thrown that they had used the periscope.

And meantime, they diverted themselves by exercising their brutal Teutonic wit at the expense of their hapless victim, and when he called to them pitifully for a drink of water to quench his raging thirst, they threw him, instead of a water-bottle, *an unlighted bomb!* Could the savages who rode with Attila have gone any further in fiendish inhumanity?

Presently there rose above the enemy's trench a loop-holed steel shield, fenced in by many sandbags, to protect the marksmen who had been selected to shoot if any rescue were attempted. A rescue by daylight now, indeed, appeared hopeless, but to a man the lieutenant's company volunteered to rush the German trench at dusk, cost what it might.

But it was feared that before dusk fell the wounded officer, if left there all day in the scorching sun, might be beyond human aid; and so, towards midday, when the suspense had become almost unendurable, permission was obtained for one of the brave Scotsmen to attempt the apparently impossible task of bringing him in—only one, for the commanding officer refused to consent to any more of his men

throwing their lives away. There were many eager volunteers, but, after some discussion, Lance-Corporal William Angus, a young man born and bred in the Lanarkshire town of Carluke, where Lieutenant Martin lived, was chosen. Angus was warned by an officer that he was going to certain death, but he was not dismayed. "It does not matter much, sir, whether sooner or later," was his firm reply.

But, before recounting this truly superb act of heroism, it may be as well to describe more fully the scene of it.

The Germans were entrenched on a bare, dry knoll, some seventy yards from the British, their trench having a high, irregular parapet, beneath which lay Lieutenant Martin, now perfectly still. In front of our lines, for a distance of some thirty paces, there grew the self-sown corn of the previous year's harvest, rank with weeds and affording good cover. But for the remainder of the distance between the trenches every square inch of the ground was commanded by the enemy's fire, and there was no shelter whatever.

Arrangements had been made for a heavy covering fire, which, it was hoped, would prevent a single German raising his head above the

Painted specially for this work] [By M. Dowdson.

Lance-Corporal W. Angus reaches Lieutenant Martin and revives him with brandy.

[*Facing p.* 218.

Painted specially for this w[illegible] [*By M. Dovaston*

Lance-Corporal W. Angus gallantly assisting Lieutenant Martin to the trenches while being heavily bombed.

[*Facing p.* 21[illegible].

parapet; the trench was lined by our best riflemen, and on a ridge behind, and perhaps six feet higher, a machine-gun had been mounted. But, however accurate this fire might be, it could not interfere with the marksmen behind the steel shield or with the bomb-throwers.

At two o'clock in the afternoon Angus slipped over the British parapet, and, flattened to earth, began to work his way towards the hostile trench, using every precaution that training and skill have given to the soldier. No finer tribute, indeed, could have been paid to the way in which the young Territorial had been taught his business than the fact that he reached the German parapet without drawing the enemy's fire.

Quickly, but coolly, he did his work. He was seen to touch the lieutenant's arm and whisper to him. Then he raised him up and placed a flask of brandy between his teeth, and together they sat at the base of the parapet for a few moments to gather strength for the fearful ordeal before them.

The enemy had heard their movements by now, but the storm of bullets from the British trenches kept all German heads under cover. However, at that moment, one of the Huns

lobbed a bomb just over the parapet. There was a loud explosion, a cloud of dust, and Angus and the wounded officer, realizing that it must be now or never, made their dash for safety, the strong man supporting the weak and guiding his faltering footsteps.

And then the Germans made their mistake. The fastest sprinter in the world would have had but one chance in a thousand of crossing that open space alive if only they had been content to leave the work of murder to their snipers. Instead, they threw more bombs, raising great pillars of smoke and dust which made it impossible for their riflemen to see where to aim, though they emptied their magazines at random.

Suddenly, from out of the midst of a cloud of dust, there emerged two figures, which stumbled painfully along towards the British, lines, falling, rising, and falling again. Lieutenant Martin managed to crawl in; Lance-Corporal Angus, rising, sore wounded, to his feet, became separated from the officer. A dozen bombs burst around him as he made for the trench at a different point, but he left the line of fire clear, and rifles and machine-guns poured in a torrent of bullets, under cover of which he got in. He was wounded in no less than forty places, while his fellow-

townsman, to save whom he had so gallantly faced almost certain death, was wounded in three places. Happily, neither was dangerously hurt, and both eventually recovered.

The heroic young Territorial received the Victoria Cross, "for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty," at the hands of the King himself.

Private Leonard Keysor's remarkable Bombing Feat at Lone Pine Trenches, Gallipoli, which gained for him the V.C.

At the beginning of August, 1915, the line held by the Australasian Corps at Gaba Tepe lay in a semi-circle, with the enemy's trenches close up to it, in some places as near as fifteen or twenty yards, except in that part adjoining the shore, where the guns of our warships kept the Turks at a distance. Bomb-fighting between them and the Anzacs was, therefore, of almost daily occurrence.

One of the best bomb-throwers among the latter was Private Leonard Keysor, of the 1st Battalion, Australian Imperial Force. On August 7th–8th there was some fierce fighting

of this description in the south-eastern corner of the Lone Pine trenches, where our men were so hard pressed that a section of the outer trench had to be abandoned, though they contrived to prevent the Turks from establishing themselves there.

During these encounters Keysor was in his element, not only throwing bombs, but constantly smothering with his coat or sand-bags those of the enemy which had fallen in the trench, and often throwing them back. Finally, when the enemy cut down the time of the fuses, he caught several bombs in the air, just as if they were cricket balls, and hurled them back before they burst.

In the course of these feats of heroism Keysor was twice wounded and marked for hospital; but he declined to give in and volunteered to throw bombs for another company which had lost all its bomb-throwers. Altogether, he was throwing bombs for fifty hours almost continuously.

Private, now Lance-Corporal, Keysor, who was awarded the Victoria Cross, "for conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty" is thirty years of age and a Londoner by birth, who went to New South Wales three years ago, previous to which he had spent several years in Canada.

Painted specially for this work] [*By E. Smythe.*

Private L. Keysor saving the lives of his comrades by throwing back for almost fifty hours Turkish bombs flung into his trench.

[*Facing p.* 222.

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Captain H. P. Hansen rescuing a wounded man from amidst burning gorse.

[*Facing p.* 223.

How Captain Howard Percy Hansen, of the 6th (Service) Lincolnshire Regiment, won the Victoria Cross, and Lance-Corporal Breese the D.C.M., at Yilghin Burnu, Gallipoli.

On the night of August 6th–7th, 1915, our Mediterranean Expeditionary Force effected an important new landing of troops at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli, the scene of the most desperate fighting at the first landing in the previous April. This new landing formed part of a great offensive movement, which, it was hoped, would give us possession of the western end of the peninsula.

While a pretence of a disembarkation at Karachali, at the head of the Gulf of Saros, and an advance in force against Achi Baba were to be made, with the object of inducing the Turks to send their reserves to Krithia, the left of the Anzac Corps would attempt to gain the heights of Koja Chemen and the seaward ridges, and the newly arrived troops, having successfully effected their disembarkation at Suvla Bay, for which it was believed the Turks would be wholly unprepared, would endeavour to carry the Anafarta Hills and link up with the left of the Australa-

sians. Thus, the British would hold the central crest of the spine of upland which runs through the western end of the peninsula, and, with any reasonable good fortune, the reduction of the European defences of the Narrows could only be a matter of time.

The force destined for Suvla Bay comprised two divisions of our New Army—(the 10th), Irish, less one brigade, and the 11th (Northern)—and two Territorial Divisions, the 53rd and 54th, and was under the command of Major-General Sir F. W. Stopford. The transports carrying the 11th Division, which had embarked at Kephalos Bay, in Imbros, entered the bay between nine and ten o'clock on the night of the 6th, and so successful had been the movements of which we have spoken in diverting the attention of the enemy elsewhere, that the landing was effected with practically no opposition, and by dawn on the 7th the whole division was ashore and in possession of both sides of the bay and the neck of land between them.

Shortly after daybreak, the greater part of the 11th Division arrived from Mitylene, and were soon followed by the remaining battalions, who came from Mudros, and by two o'clock in the afternoon the two divisions had deployed into

the plain and held a line east of the Salt Lake, running from Karakol Dagh on the north to near the butt-end of the ridge called Yilghin Burnu.

In the course of the afternoon we advanced our front a short distance in the face of a violent but comparatively innocuous shelling from the Turkish guns on the Anafarta slopes, and late that night, on our right, two battalions of the 11th Division, the 6th Lincolns and the 6th Border Regiment, succeeded in capturing Yilghin Burnu, which we called Chocolate Hill, while, to the northward, the Irish carried the parallel position of Karakol Dagh, after a fight in which the 6th Munster Fusiliers particularly distinguished themselves. Thus, our flanks were effectually safeguarded.

But it was imperative to push on at once, otherwise all the advantages of the surprise landing must be nullified. This, most unfortunately, was not done. Our two divisions amounted to some twenty-five thousand men; and on the morning of the 8th, the Turks on the Anafarta heights probably did not exceed four thousand, so that an attack resolutely pressed forward must have carried the position. The day, however, was intensely hot, and, as water had to

be brought up from the beach, and the measures taken for its conveyance and distribution proved to be inadequate, our men soon began to suffer torments from thirst; while the Turkish commander, by pushing a thick screen of riflemen into the patches of scrub which covered the edge of the slopes, cleverly succeeded in conveying the impression that we were faced by a much larger force than was actually the case.

General Stopford urged his divisional commanders to advance. But the latter objected that their men were exhausted by their efforts on the night of the 6th–7th, and by the fighting on the 7th, and that the want of water was telling cruelly on the new troops; and General Stopford did not insist. The fact that he considered that he was insufficiently supported by artillery appears to have overcome his resolution. And so, during the priceless daylight hours of the 8th, nothing was attempted beyond sporadic attacks in which we lost heavily and gained but little ground.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, Sir Ian Hamilton, our Commander-in-Chief, arrived from Imbros and boarded H.M.S. *Jonquil*, where he saw General Stopford. Sir Ian informed him that he had received intelligence that consider-

able Turkish reinforcements were on the march for Suvla, and urged that the 11th Division should without delay make a concerted attack upon the hills.

"I was met," he writes, in his despatch of November 11th, 1915, the fullest and most luminous account which we possess of any of the operations of the Great War, "by a *non possumus*. The objections of the morning were no longer valid; the men were now well rested, watered, and fed. But the divisional commanders disliked the idea of an advance by night, and General Stopford did not care, it seemed, to force their hands."

At the same time the general declared that he was as eager as the Commander-in-Chief could be to advance, and that, if the latter could see his way to overcome the objections of the divisional commanders, no one would be more pleased than himself.

The Commander-in-Chief thereupon landed and proceeded to the headquarters of the 11th Division, where he represented to Major-General Hammersley that the sands were fast running out, and that by dawn the high ground to his front might very likely be occupied in force by the enemy.

General Hammersley recognized the danger of delay, but declared that "it was a physical impossibility at so late an hour (6 p.m.) to get out orders for a night attack, the troops being very much scattered." One brigade, however—the 32nd—was, so General Hammersley admitted, more or less concentrated and ready to move, and Sir Ian Hamilton issued directions that, even if it were only with this brigade, the advance should begin at the earliest possible moment, so that a portion at least of the 11th Division should anticipate the arrival of the Turkish reinforcements on the heights, and dig themselves in in some good tactical position.

It was not, however, until 4 a.m. on the morning of the 9th that the 32nd Brigade advanced to the attack, and made a gallant attempt to carry the main Anafarta ridge. But by this time the Turks had been strongly reinforced, and, though one company of the East Yorks (Pioneers) actually succeeded in gaining the crest, they were unable to hold it, and the 32nd Brigade, fiercely assailed on both flanks, was obliged to fall back.

At 5 a.m. the 33rd Brigade advanced up the slopes of Ismail Oglu Tepe, a gorse-covered hill which our troops had named the Green Knoll,

against which an unsuccessful attempt had been made the previous day, when the position had been captured and subsequently abandoned. Our men advanced with great courage in the face of a heavy shell and rifle-fire, and in a quarter of an hour the crest was carried at the point of the bayonet. But to hold on to the ground thus gained was a far more difficult undertaking. It was a scorching day, and, as the morning advanced, the heat became more and more trying, and the troops suffered cruelly from want of water. The Turks kept up a ceaseless rifle-fire and enfiladed us with shrapnel, the shells bursting low and all along our front.

Presently, our centre began to give way, though whether this was the result of the shrapnel fire, or whether, as some say, an order to retire came up from the rear, has never been clearly established. The 6th Border Regiment and the 6th Lincolns, on the flanks, however, gallantly stood their ground, though both had sustained severe losses, until about midday an event occurred which obliged them to retire.

The scrub on Hill 70, to the north of the Green Knoll, was set alight by shell-fire, and the parched gorse and bracken were so readily kindled that, aided by the wind, which was

blowing from this direction, a wall of flame, thirty feet high, leaped up and swept right across our front. Compelled to abandon the ground which they had so gallantly won and held, the remnant of the two battalions then fell back, with the rest of the brigade, to a trench four hundred yards below.

The 6th Lincolns had suffered terribly. They had gone into action seven hundred strong; they came out a company of one hundred and twenty men, and those who reached the protection of the trench knew that hundreds of their comrades lay wounded and at the mercy of the flames. It was now that a most heroic action was performed.

The adjutant of the battalion, Captain Howard Percy Hansen, determined that an attempt must be made to rescue as many as possible and called for volunteers to help him to bring them in. Lance-Corporal Breese and two other brave men at once offered their services, and, with Captain Hansen, they climbed out of the trench, and, amidst a storm of bullets, ran up the hill and dashed into the blazing scrub. One by one, six of the wounded men were snatched from inevitable death and carried down the hill. More it was impossible to save, for by the time

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Captain H. P. Hansen and Lance-Corporal Breese carrying back a wounded man from the burning gorse to the British lines.

[*Facing p.* 230.

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Private F. W. O. Potts takes the water-bottle of a dead man to quench his thirst and that of a comrade.

the last of the six had been brought in, a barrier of fire and of dense black clouds of suffocating smoke had intervened, and the helpless men whom it enveloped would have been past all human aid, even if the rescuers could have contrived to reach them.

No further attack could be attempted that day, and by the morning of the 10th the enemy had been so strongly reinforced that our chance had gone for good. In the course of the day the 53rd Territorial Division, under General Lindley, which had now arrived, attacked the main Anafarta ridge, but failed to reach it. Our casualties from August 6th to August 10th amounted to at least thirty thousand men.

Captain Hansen's most heroic conduct was appropriately recognized by the Victoria Cross being conferred upon him ; while Lance-Corporal Breese was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, " for conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty."

Exactly a month later—on September 9th, 1915, Captain, now Major, Hansen won the Military Cross for another deed of conspicuous gallantry. Stripping himself and carrying only a revolver and a blanket for disguise, he made a reconnaissance of the coast in the vicinity of

Suvla Bay, swimming and scrambling over rocks which severely cut and bruised him. In the course of this daring expedition, he obtained some very valuable information and located a gun that had been the cause of much damage. Once he met a patrol of twelve Turks, who, fortunately, did not see him, and, later, a single Turk, whom he shot dead with his revolver; and eventually returned safely to the British lines, though in a very exhausted state.

How Private Frederick William Owen Potts, of the 1/1st Berkshire Yeomanry (T. F.), won the V.C. at Hill 70, Gallipoli.

The story of the Gallipoli campaign during the three months which followed the great landing at the end of April, 1915, is one of a slow and desperate struggle for Krithia and the Achi Baba heights, which were the first step towards the conquest of the peninsula. It was terribly costly fighting—among the most costly, indeed, in our military history—and by the end of July, out of six British divisions, our casualties amounted to nearly 50,000, of whom 8,000 were killed, 30,000 wounded and 11,000 missing.

The French losses were on a similar scale, and the naval losses must be added to the total casualties of this ill-fated expedition. But still heavier were soon to come.

At the beginning of August, our Headquarters Staff, having ascertained that the Turks were massing forces for a new attack, resolved to anticipate it by a great new offensive movement, which it was hoped would give us possession of the western end of the peninsula.

This movement, which involved four separate actions, comprised an advance on the left by the Anzac Corps against the heights of Koja Chemen and the seaward ridge, and a new landing on a large scale at Suvla Bay, which were to be masked by feints against the Bulair lines and an attack on Achi Baba. If the Anafarta hills could be taken and the new landing-force succeed in linking up with the Australasian left, the Turkish communications in the butt end of the peninsula would be cut, and the fall of Achi Baba must follow.

The landing, which took place on the night of August 6th–7th, was entirely successful, the Turks being quite unprepared for it, and our reinforcements, which consisted of two divisions of the New Army, the 10th (Irish) less one brigade,

and the 11th (Northerns), deployed into the plain, took up a broad front east of the Salt Lake, and by the following morning had made some progress and had captured Yilghin Burnu (afterwards called Chocolate Hill), and the parallel position of Karakol Dagh on the north.

But the torrid heat, lack of water, the difficulties of the country, the greenness of the troops employed, and, above all, a fatal lack of purpose and resolution in their leadership, served to nullify all the advantages of the surprise; the whole of the 8th was wasted in sporadic attacks, and, when at length a determined forward movement was undertaken, the Turks on the Anafarta heights had been so strongly reinforced that all the bravery of our men was of no avail, and their attacks were repulsed with heavy loss.

For the next few days we worked to consolidate what ground we had won, and the Suvla operations languished. But, meantime, we were preparing for a second effort, and fresh troops, consisting of the famous 29th Division and the 2nd Mounted Division of Yeomanry (organized as dismounted troopers), were brought to the scene of action, and placed under the command of General de Lisle.

The objective was the encircling hills behind the Suvla plain, extending from Hill 70 to Hill 100. The task before our men was one of the greatest difficulty, since as all the advantage of surprise had long since been lost, the only tactics left to us were those of a frontal attack, and that against a strong position held in at least equal force by the enemy.

The afternoon of August 21st was the time chosen for the attack, which was to be preceded by a heavy bombardment of the Turkish position from both land and sea. By a most unfortunate coincidence, the Suvla plain happened just then to be enveloped in a mist, which greatly handicapped our gunners, and though from 2.30 to 3 p.m. naval guns and field-guns pounded the first-line Turkish trenches, while twenty-four machine-guns in position on Chocolate Hill did what they could to lend a helping hand, the bombardment was none too accurate.

At 3 p.m. the 34th Brigade, of the 11th Division, on the right of our line, rushed the Turkish trenches between Hetman Chair and the Aire Kavak, practically without loss. But the 32nd Brigade, who advanced against Hetman Chair and the communication trench connecting it with the south-west corner of Hill 100, failed to

make good their point, through mistaking the direction and attacking from the north-east instead of the east; and the 33rd Brigade, sent up in haste, with orders to capture this communication trench at all costs, fell into precisely the same error.

Meanwhile, the 87th Brigade, of the 29th Division, whose advance had been planned for 3.30 p.m., had attacked Hill 70 with great dash, and carried some of the Turkish trenches there, though the enemy's artillery and machine-gun fire was too heavy to allow them to gain the crest.

At the same time the 86th Brigade, though they had been at first thrown into disorder by the scrub on Chocolate Hill catching fire, and had been unable to advance up the valley between the two spurs, owing to the failure of the 11th Division on their right, were making repeated and most gallant efforts to carry Hill 100 from the east. But they were decimated by a terrible cross-fire of shell and musketry, which simply swept the leading troops off the top of the spur, and were eventually obliged to fall back to a ledge to the south-west of Hill 70, where they found a little cover.

About five o'clock, whilst the fighting was still in progress, the Yeomanry moved out from

below the knoll of Lala Baba, where they had been held in reserve, to take up a position of readiness between Hill 70 and Hill 100. Their advance lay across a mile and a half of open country, where they were exposed to a devastating fire of shrapnel; but they moved forward in perfect order, as if on parade. Sir Ian Hamilton has described the scene in his despatch of December 11th, 1915:

"The advance of these English Yeomen was a sight calculated to send a thrill of pride through anyone with a drop of English blood running in their veins. Such superb martial spectacles are rare in modern war. Ordinarily, it should always be possible to bring up reserves under some sort of cover from shrapnel-fire. Here, for a mile and a half, there was nothing to conceal a mouse, much less some of the most stalwart soldiers England has ever sent from her shores. Despite the critical events in other parts of the field, I could hardly take my glasses from the Yeomen; they moved like men marching on parade. Here and there a shell would take toll of a cluster; there they lay. There was no straggling, the others moved steadily on; not a man was there who hung back or hurried."

At last, the Yeomanry reached the foot of Chocolate Hill, where they rested for half an hour. Here they were comparatively safe from shell-fire, but were much annoyed by the Turkish snipers, by whom not a few of them were hit. Having recovered their breath, the 2nd South Midland Brigade, which was composed of the Bucks, Berks and Dorset Yeomanry, under the command of Brigadier-General the Earl of Longford, who was unhappily killed during the action, moved to the left of Chocolate Hill to occupy the reserve trenches.

While the Berkshire Yeomanry were passing through a field of ripe wheat a man named West, a couple of yards in front of Private Potts, whose heroic deed we are about to relate, was struck in the thigh by an explosive bullet, which came out as big as a five-shilling piece, and, before they gained the reserve trenches, they had lost a number of men, some of whom fell wounded and were immediately afterwards hit again and killed outright.

After they had been a short while in the reserve trenches, the Yeomanry received the order to advance, and, making their way up the slopes by short rushes, they reached the foremost lines of the 29th Division, the Berkshire

Yeomanry finally halting in a gully which was occupied by the Bucks and the Dorsets.

As darkness was falling, the brigade was launched to the attack, in the hope that they might retrieve the fortunes of the day. All that valour could do they certainly did, and their right flank succeeded in carrying the trenches on a knoll so near the summit of Hill 100 that from the plain it looked as though the crest itself had been won. But this the Turks still held, and, as our men were too exhausted and had lost too heavily to undertake a second immediate assault, and as it was clear that when daylight came the knoll would be swept by fire, there was nothing for it but to fall back.

Meanwhile, on the left, the Berkshire Yeomanry had, with splendid courage and resolution, fought their way to the third Turkish trench, but by this time, so terrible had been their losses, that they were reduced to a mere handful; and, since it would have been impossible to hold the ground that they had won against a counter-attack in any force, they had no alternative but to retire also.

Private Potts was not one of those who assisted to carry the enemy's trenches, since, before he had advanced thirty yards, he was hit

at the top of the left thigh, the bullet going clean through, and, as he was subsequently told in hospital, only missing the artery by the fraction of an inch. He fell to the ground and lay there helpless, while his comrades rushed on to the attack. Fortunately he had fallen amidst a cluster of scrub, which, if it did not afford much protection from bullets, at any rate screened him from the view of the Turks, so long as he did not move.

He had been lying there about half an hour, when he heard a noise, and, looking round, saw a man whom he recognized as Private Andrews, of the Berkshires—who, by a singular coincidence, hailed, like Potts himself, from Reading—crawling painfully towards him. Andrews had a bullet in the groin—a very dangerous wound—and he was suffering terribly and losing a great deal of blood.

The two men had been together only a few minutes when a third man—a stranger to both of them—who had a wound in the leg, crawled up to their hiding-place. So cramped were they for room amid the scrub that Andrews, though in great pain, shifted his position a little, in order that the newcomer might find shelter also. This simple act of kindness probably saved his

life, as, not ten minutes afterwards, the stranger was mortally wounded by a bullet, which passed through both his legs.

The night passed and was succeeded by a day of scorching heat ; the cries of the dying man for water were pitiful, but they had not a drop amongst the three of them, and could do nothing to quench his raging thirst. Potts and Andrews suffered terribly from the same cause, and from hunger as well, and it seemed as though the day would never end.

The sun went down at last, but night brought them no relief, since it was bitterly cold, and there was a full moon, which made the country-side as light as day, so that they dared not move, for fear of attracting the attention of the Turkish snipers. Their unfortunate comrade became delirious, and kept tossing from side to side, which added greatly to the dangers of their situation, since every time he moved the Turks fired at the clump of bushes.

Potts lay as flat as he could, face to ground, for the bullets were pattering all around them ; but, even in that position, he had a very narrow escape, one actually grazing the tip of his left ear and covering his face with blood. Towards morning death put an end to the sufferings of

their hapless companion, who had kept on moaning almost to the last for the water which it was impossible for them to give him. His dead body had to remain with them, since they could neither move it nor get away themselves.

During the whole of the next day the two men remained in their hiding-place, suffering indescribably from hunger, thirst, the scorching sun, and the pain of their wounds. In desperation, they plucked bits off the stalks of the scrub and tried to suck them, in the hope of moistening their parched throats a little; but they got no relief in that way.

The day seemed interminable, for, though so exhausted, the pain they were enduring and the noise of the fighting, which was still proceeding, prevented them from obtaining any sleep. They could not see anything of their comrades, and they knew that it was impossible for any stretcher-bearers to get through to them, since they were too far up the hill, and the terrible fire kept up by the enemy rendered it hopeless for any stretcher-parties to venture out.

When darkness fell, they decided that, as it would be certain death from hunger and thirst to remain where they were, even if they escaped the Turkish bullets, there was nothing for it but

to make a move and endeavour to regain the British lines.

They accordingly started to crawl down the hill, and, though their progress was, of course, terribly slow, for every movement caused them intense pain, they succeeded, after several hours, in reaching the shelter of another patch of scrub, about three hundred yards away, where they passed the rest of the night, covering themselves with some empty sandbags that they found lying there, as they were nearly frozen.

When morning came, they were able, for the first time in nearly thirty-six hours, to obtain water, by taking the water-bottles from some dead men, who were lying near them. This afforded them immense relief.

They crept back to their shelter, and Potts dressed his comrade's wound, which was bleeding badly, with his field-dressing, and afterwards Andrews performed the same service for him.

All that day they lay concealed, but, as soon as it grew dark, they started off again, though they did not for a moment suppose that they would live to reach the British lines. Every movement was torment, on account of the thorns from the scrub, and, after going a few yards, they gave up the attempt, as Andrews was too

exhausted to go any farther. He unselfishly urged Potts to leave him and look after himself, but this the other would not hear of; and, lifting Andrews up, he made a brave effort to carry him, but found himself far too weak.

It began to look as though they were doomed to perish in this terrible place, when suddenly, like an inspiration, a means of escape presented itself to them. Casting his eyes about him, Potts caught sight of an entrenching shovel, which had been dropped during the attack of the 21st, lying a little way off. He saw at once that the shovel might be used as a kind of sledge to draw his helpless comrade into safety, and, crawling up to it, brought it to where Andrews lay, placed him upon it, and began to drag him down the hill.

Andrews sat on the shovel as best he could, with his legs crossed, the wounded one over the sound one, and, putting his hands behind his back, clasped Potts's wrists as he sat on the ground behind and hauled away at the handle.

"I prayed," says Potts, "as I never prayed before for strength, help and guidance, and I felt confident that we should win through all right."

As soon as they began to move, they were

Painted specially for this work] [*By M. Dovaston.*

Potts places his wounded comrade on an entrenching shovel to haul him to the British lines.

[*Facing p.* 244.

Painted specially for this work] [*By W. Avis.*

Second Lieutenant H. V. H. Throssell and four men catching the enemy's bombs and hurling them back from their trench.

[*See p.* 246.

spotted by the Turks, who opened fire upon them; but, careless of the risk of being hit, Potts stood up, for the first time since he had been wounded, and tugged away desperately at the handle of the shovel.

However, after going a few yards, he was forced to lie down and rest, and decided to wait until nightfall before continuing his journey. Then he started off again, and yard by yard dragged his burden down the hill, stopping every few paces to rest, for he was very weak and his wounded leg was causing him intense pain. Bullets from the Turkish snipers hummed continually past him, but, happily, none hit him, and at last, after three hours' toil and suffering, he reached a little wood, where he was in comparative safety and was able to stand upright.

A little farther on, he was challenged by a British sentry, and found that he was close to one of our advanced trenches. He explained matters to the sentry, who summoned some of his comrades, and they brought a blanket, and, lifting Andrews on to it, carried him into the trench. There everything that kindness could suggest was done for him and his gallant rescuer, and when the two had rested a little, they were placed on stretchers and carried to the nearest

dressing-station, from which they were afterwards sent to hospital at Malta.

Private Frederick William Owen Potts, who, for this amazing feat of heroism and endurance, in its way the most extraordinary of the war, was awarded the Victoria Cross, is twenty-two years of age, and joined the Berkshire Yeomanry four years ago. At the time of his enlistment, Potts could claim the distinction of being the youngest trooper in the Yeomanry, and he can now claim that of being the first of that splendid force to win the Victoria Cross. Before the war, he was employed in the Pulsometer Engineering Company's works at Reading.

How Second Lieutenant H. V. H. Throssell, of the 10th Australian Light Horse, won the V.C. at Hill 60, Gallipoli Peninsula.

In the latter part of the August of 1915 a brilliant movement was carried out on the Gallipoli Peninsula by the troops under General Birdwood's command. Operations for the capture of Hill 60 had been begun by Major-General Cox on August 21st, and to complete this task another attack was planned. Hill 60, which lies to the

north of the Kaiajik Aghala, overlooks the Biyuk Anafarta valley, and was tactically of great importance. The attack was again conducted by Major-General Cox, and under his command there were placed detachments from the 4th and 5th Australian Brigades, the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade, and the 5th Connaught Rangers.

It was decided that the advance should begin at 5 p.m. on August 27th, after being preceded by a very heavy artillery bombardment. The moment, however, that the British left the cover of their trenches a very hot fire was opened on them from field-guns, rifles and machine-guns, and this was followed before long by a storm of heavy shell. On the right of the attack the detachment from the 4th and 5th Australian Brigades was opposed by a battery of machine-guns, and against this merciless fire the men could make no headway. In the centre, however, by a most determined assault, the New Zealanders had carried one side of the topmost knoll. On the left a charge by two hundred and fifty men of the 5th Connaught Rangers broke the Turkish resistance by the suddenness of the attack and the compactness of its mass. In five minutes the Irishmen had carried the

northern Turkish communication trenches, and they at once fought their way along the trenches with bombs, opposing strong parties which hurried up in turn from the enemy supports and the reserves.

At midnight fresh troops were to have consolidated the hold of the British on the hill, but unfortunately the Irishmen were outbombed before then, and the 9th Australian Light Horse were driven back, after making a gallant attempt to recapture the lost communication trench. Nothing, however, could move the New Zealand Mounted Rifles. All through the night and all the next day they were subjected to bombing, bayonet charges, rifle, shrapnel, and heavy shell fire. But they clung to their one hundred and fifty yards of trench with the greatest gallantry, with only a sandbag barricade separating them from the Turks.

At 1 a.m. on the morning of August 29th the 10th Australian Light Horse made their memorable advance to recapture the lost communication trenches on the left. Having rushed into the trench held by the New Zealanders, they dashed across the sandbag barricade amid the cheers of the Maorilanders; and then, by shooting, bombing and bayoneting, they drove

the Turks in headlong flight down the trench for about three hundred yards to the right.

When the advance first began Second Lieutenant Throssell was in the second line, in charge of the digging party, and under his supervision the men now set to work to build up another sandbag barricade. To give his men some protection in their work, Second Lieutenant Throssell stood by them with a rifle, and every Turk who attempted to come round the traverse was shot down. Finding that this means of attacking was costing them dearly, the Turks massed round the right angle of the traverse and began to attack the barricaders with bombs.

The rest of the trench was also hotly engaged. The Turks opened a heavy rifle fire, and by continuous bomb attacks, advanced as near as possible to the whole line of the trench. The trench was a veritable inferno, but the men were most hotly engaged on the extreme right, where, with Captain Fry, Second Lieutenant Throssell had tried hard to raise some covering as a shelter against the bombs. This task was of the utmost danger, for bombs were lobbed with deadly accuracy into the trench, and were actually caught and thrown back by Second Lieutenant Throssell, with Corporals Ferrier and

McNee and Troopers Macmahon and Renton. When a bomb fell into the trench and could not be traced in the darkness, Second Lieutenant Throssell shouted the order "Down!" They at once flung themselves full length on the ground, and waited for the explosion, a second or two later.

Men, however, were falling fast, and though Captain Fry was killed, Second Lieutenant Throssell never failed in directing his men. He had been three times wounded, and Ferrier, who was an expert in bomb-throwing, had had his arm shattered by a bursting bomb. Nearly every man in the trench had suffered some injury, but the gallant and dogged defence of the 10th Light Horse was still kept up. The overwhelming onslaughts of the Turks, who in numbers were superior, necessitated two retirements, and once again Second Lieutenant Throssell stood by his men while they raised the sandbag barricades. The long-drawn-out fight against desperate odds continued into the second day, and at the height of the struggle the Turks rushed forward in a furious counter-attack, which tried the courage and endurance of the men to their uttermost limits.

Reinforcements at length came, and Second

Lieutenant Throssell retired to have his wounds dressed, but he insisted on returning to the trench afterwards. This trench, which Second Lieutenant Throssell and the men of the 10th Australian Light Horse had so gallantly captured and held, gave the British possession of Hill 60.

Second Lieutenant—now Lieutenant—Throssell had been promoted from the ranks, and much credit is due to him for his strong leadership and unflagging energy in so trying a struggle. For his most conspicuous courage and coolness he was deservedly awarded the V.C.

How Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Cookson won the D.S.O. and V.C. in Mesopotamia

On the outer edges of the war the close co-operation between the Navy and the Army was at all times conspicuous, but it was in the strenuous campaign against the Turks in Persia that it was seen in its most striking form. By the very nature of the country the fighting was practically confined to the valleys of those great rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates, and of the Shatt-el-Arab, which is the name of the single outlet by which they reach the Persian Gulf after joining at Kurnah, and the officers

and men of the Navy in those distant parts, who at first thought the war was going to end without giving them a chance of striking a blow at the enemy, threw themselves with tremendous enthusiasm into the opportunity which the Persian campaign afforded them.

It was in November, 1914, that the advanced parties of the British invading force were landed at Fao, and from that time onwards the Navy spared no effort to help them along by every means in its power. It is true that the Navy in those parts bore not the remotest resemblance—save for its men—to the squadrons of giants with which Sir John Jellicoe kept watch and ward over the North Sea; but it is equally true that such ships as his would have been altogether useless for such work as had to be done on these ancient Persian rivers.

In the early stages of the advance into the heart of the enemy's country excellent work was done by the *Clio* and *Espiegle*, little sloops of just over 1,000 tons and armed with six 4-inch and four 3-pounder guns. Their respective commanding officers were Commander Colin MacKenzie, D.S.O., who was specially promoted for his services, and Captain Wilfrid Nunn, who was awarded the D.S.O.

The advance had not been long in progress, however, before even these vessels had to be left behind, owing to the shallowness of the waters that had to be navigated. Then it was that the men of the fleet set to work and fashioned a new fleet for themselves out of whatever material they could find, and this is how the result was described by Colonel Sir Mark Sykes :

" There are paddle steamers, which once plied with passengers, and now waddle along, with a barge on either side, one perhaps containing a portable wireless station, and the other bullocks for heavy guns ashore ; there are once-respectable tugs, which stagger along under a weight of boiler plating "—to protect them from the enemy's fire—" and are armed with guns of varying calibre ; there is a launch which pants indignantly between batteries of 4.7's, looking like a sardine between two cigarette-boxes ; there is a steamer with a christmas tree growing amidships, in the branches of which its officers fondly imagine they are invisible to friend or foe.

" There is also a ship which is said to have started life as an aeroplane in Singapore, shed its wings, but kept its aerial propeller, took to water, and became a hospital. And this fleet is the cavalry screen, advance guard, rear guard,

flank guard, railway, general headquarters, heavy artillery, line of communication, supply depot, police force, field ambulance, aerial hangar, and base of supply of the Mesopotamian Expedition."

It was in one of these improvised warships—if that is not too dignified a term—that Lieutenant-Commander Edgar Christopher Cookson was serving when he won the D.S.O. It was in the early days of the advance on Kut-el-Amara, when the advanced sections of our forces had reached the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates; and before pushing on along the valley of the former river, it was necessary to ascertain whether any considerable body of enemy troops had withdrawn up the Euphrates with the intention of coming down upon our lines of communication after the main force had continued its advance.

The task of carrying out the reconnaissance fell to Lieut.-Commander Cookson and his armed launch, the *Shushan*. The little steamer plugged her way up the Euphrates for some distance, a sharp look-out being kept on either side; but no sign of the enemy was discovered. Presently Cookson came to a tributary branching off to the left, and, impelled more by instinct than

Painted specially for this work] [*By H. G. Swanwick.*

Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Cookson steering the "Shushan" down a tributary of the Euphrates under heavy fire.

[*Facing p.* 254.

Painted specially for this work] [*By H. G. Swanwick*

Shells from the Turkish shore batteries hit the "Comet" and compel Lieutenant-Commander E. C. Cookson to get back.

[*Facing p. 255*.

anything else, slackened the speed of the lumbering *Shushan* and steered her out of the main stream between the closer banks of the creek.

On either side the tributary was flanked by a dense growth of rushes, which gently swayed in the wash of the passing launch. For some distance the *Shushan* pushed on, the men on deck scanning every yard of the banks as they passed, still without finding a trace of a living soul. The lieutenant-commander was about to give up this particular part of his search as useless, and had already given orders preparatory to putting the vessel about for the return journey, when suddenly from among the rushes on both sides of the creek there burst forth a furious fusillade of rifle-fire.

The Arabs, lying concealed amidst and behind the dense-growing rushes, could not be seen; but the guns, machine-guns and rifles on board the *Shushan* instantly got to work, and rained a steady stream of bullets along the banks. With all possible haste, but still all too slowly, the cumbersome *Shushan* was turned round in mid-stream, and off she set at the best of her poor speed, to break out of the hornets' nest into which she had stumbled. The enemy had disposed themselves well, but fortunately the launch

had been well fitted up for the work she had to do, and rifle-fire had little effect upon her. Two or three small guns in the hands of the enemy might easily have meant her complete destruction.

Lieutenant-Commander Cookson had the misfortune to be severely wounded early in the fight, receiving an injury that should have kept him under cover until a place of safety had been reached; but as soon as his wound had been roughly dressed, he insisted on taking personal charge of the vessel again. Going up-stream the *Shushan* had been able to pick her way carefully; but now she was running for life in strange waters, where the slightest error in navigation would probably have thrown her, helpless, into the hands of the enemy. But Cookson handled his craft with admirable coolness and skill, pausing here, where a favourable opportunity offered for a round from one of the "big" guns, and running ahead with a burst of speed when discretion dictated.

After a most exciting dash, a bend in the stream brought the freer and friendlier waters of the Euphrates into view again, and the little *Shushan*, her sides and upper works riddled with bullet-holes, ambled leisurely down to her base, with as much dignity as such a quaint craft could

command. Lieutenant-Commander Cookson's D.S.O. was awarded for "most ably extricating the vessel from a perilous position under heavy rifle-fire"; and besides that, he had, though at considerable risk, secured valuable information regarding the position and strength of the enemy.

The country was destined before many months were passed to lose the services of this gallant and distinguished young officer, though not before he had crowned his career with a deed that earned the highest of all the awards a fighting man can win. It was on May 9th, 1915, that he won the D.S.O.; and after a short spell of rest to recover from his wound, he was appointed to command the *Comet*, one of the largest boats in the river flotilla. On September 28th, 1915, when our forces were advancing successfully towards Kut, the *Comet*, which was in advance of the army, sighted a large enemy camp ahead, whereupon she signalled the news to those behind and prepared to wait until morning, when it was decided the attack should be made.

At daybreak the gunboats—there were others in company with the *Comet*—began to shell the enemy's camp, edging up closer and closer all the time. One by one the enemy's big guns were knocked out, but there was one that would

not be silenced. Its position was concealed by a bend in the river, and every time the *Comet* put her nose round the bend, in order to get a better target, the Turkish gunners, knowing the range of the bend "to a T," opened such an accurate fire that there was nothing for Lieut.-Commander Cookson to do but to get back again. The *Comet* was hit several times, and one shell went through the funnel; but no one on board was hurt. Presently, however, the field artillery ashore got to work, and after an exchange that did not end until five in the afternoon, the Turkish gun was finally silenced.

After that, the enemy cleared off as fast as they could; but one of our aeroplanes reported that they had placed a formidable obstruction across the river, in order to prevent the advance of our armed steamers, and so delay the pursuit. As soon as it was dark three boats, the *Comet* leading, set out to remove the obstruction. A number of Turks, however, had been left behind to protect it, armed with rifles and hand-bombs, and began to attack the small flotilla as soon as it came within reach. An answering fire was promptly opened from our boats, while some of the guns were trained on the boom, in an attempt to destroy it that way. The obstruc-

tion consisted of three large dhows securely strung together and to the shore by means of strong wire hawsers.

Gun-fire was quite useless against such a structure, and after but a little delay Cookson ordered the *Comet* to be placed alongside the centre dhow. As the gunboat approached, the fire from the shore increased in intensity; but when the two boats were close enough together, the lieutenant-commander, hatchet in hand, sprang on board the dhow and began to hack at the hawsers. Exposure to the enemy's fire was inevitable, but with a little good fortune the task might have been carried through. Unhappily, there was no good fortune for Cookson that night. A score of Turkish marksmen turned their rifles on him, and before his work was well begun he fell, shot in seven places. Ready hands dragged him back on board the *Comet;* but he was within a minute of death. His last words were: "I am done. It's a failure. Get back at full speed." Next day the Turks had gone, and the boom was removed in perfect safety.

Four months after his death the Victoria Cross was awarded "for most conspicuous gallantry on this occasion."

How Second Lieutenant Rupert Price Hallowes, of the 4th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment, won the Military Cross at Hooge (July, 1915) and the Victoria Cross at Hooge (September, 1915).

The summer campaign of 1915 in the West on the British section of the Allied front made comparatively little difference to the contours of our line as marked upon the map. Nevertheless, if measured by the gain or loss of ground the fighting was of slight importance, it was often of a desperate character and productive of heavy casualties.

This was particularly the case in the Hooge area, lying on either side of the Menin–Ypres road, where fighting of a fierce and sanguinary character went on intermittently all through the summer months. Thus, on the last day of May, we captured the outbuildings at Hooge, and, after being driven out, recaptured them again on the night of June 3rd. On the 16th, we attacked with some success south of Hooge, and carried one thousand yards of German front trenches and part of their second line, and afterwards repulsed a strong counter-attack. On the 18th of the same month, we made some further

progress north of the Menin–Ypres road; while on July 19th an enemy redoubt at the western end of the Hooge defences was successfully mined and destroyed, and a small portion of their trenches was captured.

In this action an officer of the 4th Middlesex, one of the battalions of the 4th Division, Lieutenant Rupert Price Hallowes, won the Military Cross, by the daring bravery he displayed when the Germans delivered their counter-attack. Perceiving that, owing to our shortage of bombs, the enemy were approaching down the communication trench, he left his own trench, and, with the most perfect indifference to the risk to which he was exposing himself, went out into the open and fired at them, killing or wounding several. Later, he assisted in the repair of the communication-trench, and in rebuilding a parapet that had been blown in by a shell, both under very heavy fire; while throughout the night he rendered great assistance in keeping in touch with our supports and in supplying bombs.

Fierce fighting again occurred at Hooge between July 30th and August 9th, but after that there was relative quiet along this part of our front until the last week in September, when a strong offensive movement was under-

taken by us, with the object of detaining the left wing of the Duke of Würtemberg's command, and preventing the Germans from sending reinforcements southwards to the La Bassée district, where the main British advance was about to begin.

At four o'clock on the morning of the 25th our artillery preparation began, and soon after 4.30 the British infantry advanced to the attack, the 14th Division, on the left, against the Bellewaarde Farm, and the 3rd Division, which included the 4th Middlesex, against the enemy's position north of Sanctuary Wood, on the south side of the Menin–Ypres road. The charge of our infantry carried all before it, and the whole of the German first-line trenches were soon in our hands. But the enemy had concentrated a mass of artillery behind their lines, and our new front was subjected to so heavy a bombardment that the gains on our left could not be held, though south of the highway the 3rd Division still clung to some of the ground it had won, and managed to consolidate its position.

Between that day and October 1st, during which time the trenches held by the 4th Middlesex were subjected to four heavy and prolonged bombardments, and repeated counter-attacks,

Second Lieutenant Hallowes again most brilliantly distinguished himself, "displaying," in the words of the *Gazette*, "the greatest bravery and untiring energy and setting a magnificent example to his men." On the night of September 26th–27th, perceiving two wounded men of the Royal Scots lying out in the open, he left his trench, and, under a fierce rifle-fire, coolly superintended their removal to a place of safety. Scarcely had he returned to the trenches than the Germans started another severe bombardment, and shells of every description came raining down. The range was very accurate, and, fearing that some of the men might begin to flinch, Lieutenant Hallowes, utterly regardless of his own danger, climbed on to the parapet to put fresh heart into them. "He seemed to be everywhere, giving encouragement to everyone," wrote a private of his battalion.

Lieutenant Hallowes also made more than one daring reconnaissance of the German position, and when the supply of bombs was running short he went back under very heavy shell-fire and brought up a fresh supply.

For six days this most heroic officer braved death successfully, but such entire disregard of danger as he displayed cannot long be continued

with impunity, and on the seventh (October 1st), he met his inevitable end. He was a hero to the last, for we are told that "even after he was mortally wounded, he continued to cheer those around him and to inspire them with fresh courage."

The Victoria Cross, for which he appears to have been recommended after the fighting on September 25th, was awarded him posthumously, "for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty," and no one will be inclined to dispute his right to a foremost place on our most glorious roll of honour.

Rupert Price Hallowes was born at Red Hill, Surrey, in 1880, the youngest son of Dr. F. B. Hallowes, of that town, and was educated at Haileybury College. He re-enlisted in the Artists' Rifles on August 6th, 1914, two days after the outbreak of war, and was sent to France at the end of the following December. On April 7th, 1915, he was given a commission as second lieutenant in the 4th Middlesex. Like so many very brave men, he appears to have been a singularly modest one, and even after winning the Military Cross could not be persuaded by his relatives to tell them anything of the gallant action for which it had been awarded.

How Second Lieutenant Gilbert Stuart Martin Insall, of the No. 11 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, won the V.C. near Achiet.

A splendid example of the skill and intrepidity of our younger airmen was given on November 7th, 1915, near Achiet. Second Lieutenant Gilbert Stuart Martin Insall was patrolling in a Vickers fighting machine, accompanied by First-Class Air Mechanic T. H. Donald as gunner, when he sighted a German machine, which he at once pursued and attacked. The German pilot cunningly led the Vickers machine over a rocket-battery, but, with great skill, Lieutenant Insall dived and got to close range, when Donald fired a drum of cartridges into the German machine, which had the effect of stopping its engine.

The German pilot then dived through a cloud, followed by Lieutenant Insall, and Donald again opening fire, the German machine was brought down heavily in a ploughed field four miles south-east of Arras. On perceiving the Germans scramble out of their machine and prepare to fire, Lieutenant Insall dived to five hundred feet, thus enabling Donald to open fire on them

at close range. The Germans thereupon took to their heels, one assisting the other, who was apparently wounded.

Heavy rifle-fire was directed by other Germans at the daring enemy, but, in spite of this, Lieutenant Insall turned again, and an incendiary bomb was dropped on the German machine, which was last seen wreathed in smoke. The victor then headed west, in order to return over the German trenches, but, as he was at an altitude of two thousand feet, he dived across them for greater speed, Donald firing into the trenches as he passed over. The German fire, however, damaged the petrol-tank, and, with great coolness, Lieutenant Insall landed under cover of a wood, five hundred yards inside our lines.

The German artillery started to shell our machine as it lay on the ground, and it is calculated that some hundred and fifty shells were fired at it, but no material damage was done. A good deal, however, had already been caused by rifle-fire; but during the night it was repaired behind screened lights, and at dawn Lieutenant Insall flew his machine home.

This most gallant young officer was subsequently awarded the Victoria Cross "for most conspicuous bravery, skill and determination."

How Lieutenant Walter Lorraine Brodie, of the 2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry, won the V.C. near Becalaere.

When the great offensive, which began on September 25th, 1915, was brought to a standstill at the beginning of November, movements on a great scale gave way to trench warfare. Raids and local attacks were the means of placing the enemy on tenterhooks, and compelling him to hold his men to their positions. For when continuously raided up and down his line, he could not risk the consequences of transferring men from one front to the other.

On November 11th the Germans were in occupation of a part of the British trenches near Becalaere, and from the number of men who had been drafted into it, it seemed probable that they would make a great effort to hold out if attacked.

Lieutenant Walter Lorraine Brodie, of the 2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry, took command, and, having selected his men, he led them rapidly along the trench. Confined between two walls and with advance only possible straight ahead of them, Lieutenant Brodie and his men dashed forward, with their attention riveted on the enemy.

When it came, the impact was terrific. The Germans proved themselves most obstinate opponents, but with the hesitation born of fear, they seemed unable to strike effectively with the bayonet, preferring to try and hold back the British by rapid rifle-fire.

The struggle became a terrible *mêlée*, in which the cries and groans of the wounded were punctuated by the sharp crack of rifles. The tactics of the enemy succeeded for a time, and then, when matters appeared to be dangerous, Lieutenant Brodie closed in and bayoneted several Germans in quick succession.

Quicker in their movements than the enemy, the British now began to hustle them. Bayonets were freely used. But the Germans stubbornly contested the ground, leaving dead and wounded whenever they gave way. Fifty-one prisoners fell into the hands of the British, who at length cleared the trench. No less than eighty of the Germans were killed, and this alone will show how determined was their resistance. For the conspicuous bravery with which he had led his men, Lieutenant Brodie was awarded the V.C.

How the Rev. Edward Noel Mellish, Temporary Chaplain to the Forces, won the V.C. at St. Eloi.

On March 14th–15th, 1915, the village of St. Eloi, which lies along the Ypres–Armentières road, a little to the north of Wytschaete, was the scene of desperate fighting, when the Germans, after a tremendous artillery preparation, followed by the explosion of mines and a determined infantry attack in great force, succeeded in capturing the greater part of our first-line trenches, only to be driven out of them again by a dashing counter-attack in the early hours of the following morning.

A little more than a year later, on March 27th, 1916, and the two following days, St. Eloi was again the scene of a fierce and sanguinary struggle; but on this occasion it was the British who were the aggressors, and, moreover, they succeeded in holding the ground that they had won.

The main burden of the struggle was borne by the 1st Northumberland Fusiliers—the famous "Fighting Fifth"—the 4th Royal Fusiliers, and some Canadian battalions. But it was the "Fighting Fifth" who were entitled to the lion's share of the victory which the British achieved.

Supported by the Royal Fusiliers, they carried the first and second lines of German trenches on a front of some six hundred yards, capturing many prisoners and causing great loss to the enemy.

Seldom, even in the present war, have soldiers been called upon to undertake a tougher job than that allotted to the Northumberland Fusiliers. The enemy's trenches were so ingeniously and elaborately protected by wire entanglements that it seemed almost impossible to reach them. But the Fusiliers were not to be discouraged by obstacles which no longer have any terror for the British.

It was a painfully slow and dangerous task to cut through the wire, especially as our men were in full view of the enemy's guns, which belched forth a constant hurricane of shells. At last, however, an opening was effected, and then, says a Canadian officer, who was present, " the Fusiliers went for the first line of German trenches for all the world as though they were a football team rushing a goal at a Crystal Palace Cup-Tie final. A large number of the brave fellows fell, for their bodies were an easy target for the German machine-guns and riflemen. They had to make a dash over a stretch of ground which afforded absolutely no cover ; there was nothing

between them and death but the breeze of an early morning—that is the only word to describe it—and, like a wave, they swept over the German trenches."

The Huns, contrary to their usual practice, did not flinch before the British steel, and a desperate hand-to-hand struggle ensued. Finally, the superior bayonet work of our men gave them the upper hand, but not until the trenches were choked with corpses and slippery with blood.

Subsequently, the trenches captured by the Northumberland and Royal Fusiliers were taken over by the Canadians, who gained further ground. After exploding five mines in a direct line, which completely shattered the German defences, the Dominion troops advanced, under cover of a heavy artillery fire, and, though the enemy outnumbered them by at least five to two, carried the position at the point of the bayonet. Nor would they yield an inch of the ground which they had won, though, as the position was of vital importance to the Huns, they made desperate and repeated efforts to dislodge them.

Many acts of signal heroism were performed during the Battle of St. Eloi. When the tele-

phone-wires were cut, one man traversed two hundred yards of open country under terrific shell-fire, not once, but three times, to link up his battery.

Cut off from his comrades in an isolated trench, another man refused to leave a wounded comrade, though the trench was being so heavily shelled that he expected every minute to be his last, and, finally, succeeded in dragging the wounded man back to comparative safety.

A young Staff officer, with the most complete indifference to the shells which were falling all about him, reconnoitred the enemy's position, and obtained information which contributed materially to ensure the success of the attack; and Canadians on several occasions crawled out under a heavy machine-gun fire to bring in wounded Germans, one of whom—an officer—showed his appreciation of his rescuer's courage and humanity by endeavouring to shoot him!

But one of the bravest deeds of all—or rather, series of deeds—was that performed by an Army chaplain and former London curate, the Rev. Edward Noel Mellish, attached to the Royal Fusiliers, which was most deservedly recognized by the Victoria Cross being awarded him.

During the three days' fighting this heroic

" padre " went repeatedly under heavy and continuous shell and machine-gun fire between our original trenches and those captured from the enemy to tend and rescue wounded men. He brought in ten badly wounded men on the first day, from ground which was literally swept by the fire of the enemy's machine-guns, and the danger which he ran may be gauged from the fact that three were actually killed while he was dressing their wounds.

The Royal Fusiliers were relieved on the second day, but he went back and brought in twelve more wounded men. Nor did he desist from his efforts until the end of the battle, for on the night of the third day he took charge of a party of volunteers, who went out to rescue the remaining wounded.

" Nothing could be finer," says an officer of the Northumberland Fusiliers, " than the way Chaplain Mellish did his duty, and more than his duty, during the time that he was stationed near us. Immediately the troops captured the trenches, and while the wounded men were picking their way painfully back, the enemy's guns were turned on full blast, and the intervening ground was deluged with shell-fire and

machine-gun bullets, not to mention shells or grenades that came from a portion of trench still in the enemy's hands.

"Into this tempest of fire the brave parson walked, a prayer-book under his arm, as though he were going to church parade in peace time. He reached the first batch of wounded, and knelt down to do what he could for them. The first few men he brought in himself without any aid; and it made us think a bit more of parsons, to see how he walked quietly under fire, assisting the slow-moving wounded, and thinking more of saving them from discomfort than of his own safety. It was only when the ambulance-parties were able to get out, during a lull in the fighting, that he took a rest.

"Next day he was out on the job as unconcerned as ever, and some men of my regiment had reason to be grateful for his attentions to them at critical moments. Some of the men would never have survived the ordeal, had it not been for the prompt assistance rendered them by Mr. Mellish.

"One story of a Cockney soldier who was aided by the parson is worth repeating, because it is the best tribute to the parson that could be put on record. When the wounded man, who

had hitherto been noted for his anti-religious bias, was safe in the base-hospital, he told his mates how he had been saved, and asked : ' What religion is 'e ? ' He was told, and made the answer : ' Well, I'm the same as 'im now, and the bloke as sez a word agen our Church will 'ave 's —— 'ead bashed in ! ' "

When the Rev. Noel Mellish, who is thirty-four years of age, was gazetted Captain to the Forces, it was a case of "back to the Army again," since he was a soldier before he became a clergyman, and, needless to say, a brave one. He went out to South Africa in December, 1900, and was among the first recruits for Baden-Powell's Police, with whom he did a good deal of block-house and frontier work. Before leaving England, he had been in the Artists' Rifles, and so was well acquainted with military discipline and procedure.

One who served with him in the South African War, speaks of him as the bravest man he knew. On one occasion, a party of Baden-Powell's Police were surrounded by Boers in a farmhouse, and there was practically no chance for them. Mr. Mellish was sent on what seemed a forlorn hope for assistance. He got safely through and

delivered his message; but, though his duty ended there, he made his way back to his comrades in the besieged farmhouse, to tell them that relief was on the way, and to do all he could to help them to hold out.

At the close of the war he returned to England, but not long afterwards went out to South Africa again, and took an important post in the diamond mines at Jagersfontein, and there was no man more esteemed and honoured all over the mine. During the years he was at Jagersfontein he assisted at a church and native mission, reading the lessons at the mission, in the somewhat fearsome language understood by the natives. Despite long and arduous days in the mine, he made light of sitting up all night by the bedside of a sick friend, and his life generally at Jagersfontein was such as to justify the remark of one of its inhabitants: "It is men such as Mr. Mellish who restore one's faith in mankind."

Returning to England, he studied at King's College, London, and in 1912 took Holy Orders, and became one of the curates at St. Paul's Church, Deptford, a parish with a population of over twelve thousand, mostly poor people. In his parish he was just as strenuous a worker as he has proved himself on the field of battle. His

chief activities were in connection with the Church Lads' Brigade, and week in and week out he laboured to perfect the boys in their drill and other duties.

A fine specimen of a man himself—he stands over six feet in height and is broad and muscular—he taught his little band the value of discipline, and "to play the game." He took over an old public-house at the back of the Empire Music-hall, Deptford, and converted it into a boys' club. The youngsters insisted on naming it after their captain, and so the place is known as the "Noel Club."

Mr. Mellish is only the second clergyman to win the Victoria Cross. The first was an Irishman, the Rev. James Williams Adams, who won it so far back as 1879, during the Afghan War. Mr. Adams, who was known as the "Fighting Parson," shared all the hardships of Lord Roberts's famous march from Kabul to Kandahar; but it was at an earlier stage of the war that he gained the much coveted distinction.

The Afghans were pressing on the British force at the village of Bhagwana, when two troopers of the 9th Lancers, during a charge, were hurled, with their horses, into a deep and wide nullah. Adams, without hesitation, went

to their assistance, plunged into the nullah, and, being an unusually powerful man, by sheer strength dragged the men, one after another, from under the struggling animals. The Afghans were close upon them and were keeping up a hot fire; but Adams paid no heed to his own safety till he had pulled the almost exhausted Lancers to the top of the slippery bank. The same day he rescued another of the Lancers from the Afghan horsemen. Lord Roberts mentions the "Fighting Parson" and these incidents in his memoirs. Mr. Adams died in 1903, when rector of Ashwell, Rutland.

Early in the war the Rev. Noel Mellish, whose parents reside at Lewisham, lost a brother, Lieutenant Coppin Mellish, who came back from Canada to join the Army.

How Private William Frederick Faulds, of the South African Infantry, won the V.C. at Delville Wood.

That the men of South Africa should have distinguished themselves so soon after their arrival on the battle-front in France is a matter for very real congratulations. Not since the South African war of 1899–1902 had they seen fighting, and then under conditions very different to those

which they had come to face in Europe. They had been accustomed to fighting on the open veldt, where plenty of movement was always necessary to the successful carrying-out of their methods of strategy, and where, as a consequence, their trenches were but lightly dug. Methods of warfare in France were very different. Here the men found that operations were carried out along two great lines of trenches, which opposed each other often at a distance of a few yards only. They quickly settled down to the changed conditions, however, and began to take their full share of the Great War on the battlefields of France.

One of the first to win the coveted V.C. in France was Private William Faulds, of the South African Infantry, and for coolness and courage under fire his gallantry has surely never been surpassed. His officer, Lieutenant Craig, had gathered together a bombing-party, with the intention of carrying out what appeared to be a surprise attack on the German lines at Delville Wood. Forty yards of ground lay between the British and German trenches, and as Lieutenant Craig and his party attempted to rush across, they were raked by a terrific rifle and machine-gun fire. Lieutenant Craig dropped

wounded, and the majority of his party, if they were not killed, were disabled.

For a time the wounded officer lay midway between the two lines of trenches, quite unable to move. Faulds, however, saw him lying helpless on the ground, and with two others who had volunteered to help him, climbed over the parapet in broad daylight, and running out, picked up Lieutenant Craig and carried him back. But before the trench was reached one of Faulds' plucky assistants had been severely wounded.

Two days later Faulds, with most conspicuous bravery, went out into the line of fire and rescued another man. At the time the artillery was so intense that stretcher-bearers and others considered that any attempt to bring in the wounded man meant certain death. Going out alone, however, Faulds reached the man and succeeded in bringing him safely back to the trench. He then carried him a distance of nearly half a mile to a dressing-station, subsequently returning to his platoon. For the cool and unflinching way in which he had again so gallantly risked his life for another, Faulds was most deservedly awarded the V.C.

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